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THE FLOWERING SEED

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THERE is morning light here, shafting down through the live oaks in smoky beams. After the night's rain that washed away a six-month summer dust, the little dark leaves gleam and twinkle. Softened, the brilliant sunshine is released by them to the fronds of the tree ferns that grow below, outstaying their day by geologic ages.

Never so beckoned the green world, or the sky or the sea. A mile or more beyond and below the live oaks the Pacific glitters, marked near the shore by a purple streak of shadow in its azure, that is giant seaweed anchored there, a floating breakwater from the bottoms.

To the east, toward the breadth of the continent, the mountains rise. I see, beyond the walled garden outside my study window, their arid ranges, where canyons are carven, looking deceptively easy of ascent. The white-limbed sycamores, at least, troop up them, winter-naked now and clearly seen across this western distance. Higher in the peaks, I know, the cedars and firs begin; higher still, cold lakes are mirroring the big-cone pines, the greatest in the world.

Close at hand the wild tangle of the chaparral, sun-baked, sends up a pillar

of incense. All of the life that is not ours, the other half, by which and with which we the animal life share earth, holds up its hands to the sunshine.

As the brain of man is the speck of dust in the universe that thinks, so the leaves — the fern and the needled pine and the latticed frond and the seaweed ribbon — perceive the light in a fundamental and constructive sense. The flowers looking in from the walled garden through my window do not, it is true, see me. But their leaves see the light, as my eyes can never do. They take it, as it forever spills away radiant into space in a golden waste, to a primal purpose. They impound its stellar energy, and with that force they make life out of the elements. They breathe upon the dust, and it is a rose.

This serene sister life, this green society, was here before us; we are wholly dependent upon it; it reaches farther over and into our common earth and leaves a deeper imprint there than we do or our fellow creatures. On icy peaks the sprawling crustose lichen clings where even a mountain goat would gasp and stumble. Roots, following a thread-form water vein into the ground,

will penetrate where it profits no beast to burrow. By the billion of billions the little jeweled diatoms float in the arctic seas, forming the basic food of all that swims. Where there is rain, the forests rise in their tiered solemnity; where rain falls scant, the hollow steppes brim with mobile grass, to the half of a continent. In the crevices of sternly naked cliffs, lowly plants wedge their soft bodies, secrete their tiny acids, and so, etching, leaching, prying, and prizing their way, they are among the forces that literally move mountains. They may in time degrade those heights and mollify their sterility. They can themselves become rock and lay down geologic strata. The iron ranges of Minnesota, the Pennsylvania seam of bituminous coal, limestone of Bermuda, chalk rock under the city of Richmond — all once were within the cell wall of a plant.

These are the larger movements; they are hard facts such as a man's mind can entertain with satisfaction. When he walks in the woods, he becomes aware of something further, that escapes him. If he looks, if he listens, he begins to guess how behind the summer glitter of the leaves the sinews and pulls of great forces must be tensed and laxed, in all that relentless living. He sets a first footstep into the plant kingdom.

There are always some of us, not a few, in every generation, who go over wholly to the green flag. It is such a passionless fealty, so reticent a love, that neither do trumpets sound for it nor quarrels arise from it. Only, you will find that those who have pledged allegiance are happy about it in quiet.

The plantsman may begin as a gardener, or as an admirer and patriot of trees. Or his interest may have been captivated by the traffic that goes on in the strange plant stuffs of earth, fibre and gum and essential oils. Or he may simply see what, when I was a boy, I saw with longing — that the very weeds would go along companionably, if I could name them. And that a tree on

the king's land would be mine, if I knew how the sap got up in it in spring.

To travel in the plant kingdom, I wanted to know the language. It is a living language, with a precise grammar, intimately inflected, colored by overtones of meaning. It has, if you listen for it, a lovely fall upon the ear. I bought a grammar of it, a botany manual, and kept it secretly in my desk drawer, in that high New York office where my work, my first job, was something very different and much duller. That book was severely technical; I did not a quarter understand it, not did I recognize any of the flowers that it described.

But they grew, the book said, 'by cold springs in deep mountain woods,' 'on high prairies,' 'in cypress "bottoms,"' or 'through the oak openings of Kentucky.' Sometimes an exotic was to be 'found on ballast about Atlantic seaports, naturalized from Asia,' or else 'escaped from old gardens to ditches and fallow fields.' Grandly our native species would range 'from Old Point Comfort to the Florida Keys, and south through the Antilles to Trinidad.' They clung to a stony foothold 'on serpentine outcrops from the Baie des Chaleurs to the northern shore of Lake Superior, and far to the north and westward.' They went where I — discounting reason and the precepts of economic morality — determined too to go, 'south on the mountains, to the high peaks of the Blue Ridge and the Great Smokies.'

On a day black with the icy conviction of March rain, my train was shot under the Hudson and up over the Jersey marshes where the dead reed grass bowed down in long sad lines. My heart was not light yet, here where a hard and ugly way prevailing made guilt out of any other. As the big smoky cities rolled like unlovely beads off the thread of the tracks, I thought how everywhere, in Elizabeth and Trenton, in Wilmington and Baltimore, young men, and old, and women, were all at work,

where those lights burning by day pricked through the rain. All holding jobs and grateful for them as a punished boy for supper thrust through the door. And I was going south, running away.

In the night I woke because the train had stopped. Perhaps it was somewhere near the foot of the Craggies; I heard the roar of a mountain river, and a higher frailer sound above the churning water, the singing of a forest in the night wind.

I wondered if these were hemlocks swinging incense boughs, or knotted pines blistered with lakes of resin. Somewhere, in the loftier peaks, there must be black spruces too, and she-balsams, dripping the breath of health. These the nobles; I thought of what humbly grows between their roots, club moss and oxalis and wild ginger whose little spotted jug flowers lie buried to the lip. That river must have risen from icy springs under the balsams; already it was rushing toward the sea, to the low country of the long-leaf pine and palmetto. I was over the frontier unchallenged.

By noon of the next day the three-leaved windflower lay in the pages of my manual where I had traced it down to its description and its range 'in cool woods, south along the mountains to Carolina.'

In the coves, the high glens barred with rock and fallen log, there linger still in the Appalachians the last remnants of an ancient Tertiary flora that to-day survives only there and in the mountains of Japan and China. It ranges, to be sure, all over our eastern states, but the farther you leave the Carolinas behind, the less there is of it. In the southern highlands it is concentrated, carried out, as the mathematicians say, to a higher power. Nearly free of intrusive nondescript elements and vagabond weeds, it forms an entity discrete, descript. It is an aristocratic plant society, to which nothing can be added now unless you first make a place for it by destroying something irreplaceable.

I shall never be done with the cata-

logue of that aristocracy, begun that year — it was twenty ago. I followed the spring as it marched triumphantly north, working my way along the wall of the Blue Ridge (haughtily skirting west of the cities, through the Catskills) till the trail ended in asters stiff with autumn frost, in the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

Collecting, identifying, drawing, I had passed over the surface of things. I knew I would do no better were I to go, as I was, to the Virgin Islands (which I seriously contemplated) or to inconceivable Nepal.

In the lovely midst of that green kingdom I found that I was lost. I could go no further; the wall of the woods rose thorny before me. When you lose heart, you believe what other people will tell you is right for you. So I started back for New York to look for another job. Changing trains in Boston, I stopped over and went out to Cambridge to see the glass flowers in Agassiz Museum.

Here, swelled like a bubble, were the inner secrets of floral structure. Here in giant lucidity were all the forms of flowers, the variations upon simple numerical symmetries which human imagination could never have conceived. Here were the families, marshaled into their cohorts, rising from duckweed to the sunflower. You could follow the thread of any one of many guiding ideas in their evolution — pollen's progress from the wind-borne golden spores of the pine with their great air sacs, to the pellets, intricately devised, by which the orchid stakes all upon a single insect transport. Or you could give a whole day to wonder at the ovaries, cross-sectioned and cut lengthwise, showing how ovules stand, stacked in rows as if by a purposive hand, awaiting the potent moment of fertilization when the pollen tubes tunnel through their prison to them.

My path was under my feet again.

Harvard was already at its first classes; they were overfull. But a berth for New York went empty out of South

Station that night. The young man who might have gone that road stood on the rainy porch of the professor who had written that manual once hidden in the desk, ringing his bell, knocking at the gates of science.

II

It is not for all men actively to practise a science and advance it. But its gifts are gratuitous, and there is no one who need go in want of them, nor anyone, I think, who may scorn them wholly and call himself a modern. For it speaks the universal language, and prevails upon the mysteries by friendship. It is the taste of dragon's blood upon the lips that makes us understand the speech of birds. Where it turns its gaze, it puts a new dimension in the scene, deepening it with marvelous perspectives. And though so marvelous, they are real — more real than the evidence of the unaided senses. So science sees into the heart of the oak.

This science, this cool way of looking, this thorough journey round a little space and daring project into vast spaces, carried away a mind that had been encouraged so far chiefly to intuitional judgments and emotional understanding. It was all too easy to have opinions on books, music, architecture. But appreciation is an edge that dulls with repetition; emotion is inconstant. Science has no use for any of this; it required instead a bracing impersonality. Under the spell of the new vision, three student years rushed by, and night after night it would be six-thirty when they had to put me out of the Gray Herbarium.

At Harvard the big men in the science faculty are found in the elementary courses. However imperfectly I understood them, they were giving me of the very best that pure science could offer. It was foreseeable that the details of all these courses might be forgotten. It was common knowledge that our teachers did not agree among themselves. But they had one spirit in common and they saw

the same vision. That was what you were there to see, through them.

They brought discipline to cap the spouting of youthful convictions. They taught us to postpone judgments, to acknowledge mistakes, to mistrust your own work and give cordial credit to others', to assume nothing general from particular instance, to search for contrary evidence as if it were pearls, to walk all around a question, to define a problem, to finish what you began. These are some of their Commandments, and if we did not keep them any better than God's, mercy shown to the ignorant could no longer be ours.

The chemistry and zoölogy and philosophy students gave me, practically, the gist of the advanced courses a botanist could not crowd in. Youngsters who knew a really remarkable lot about insects, genetics, and ancient life on earth shared it in the same rich gossip. So I became secretly persuaded that the value of a speciality was to learn it not in a specialized way but connectively, excursively, in its relation to the allness of things.

In the botanical faculty, at least, there was little hint that all these courses in the chemistry of plant life, structure of woods, the geography of plant distribution, and the evolution of the fungi, had application. A thorough grounding in theory is of course a splendid background for subsequent application, but my titans did not consider themselves in the background of anything. Except for one splendid course in the plant diseases, I never heard mention of any economic aspect of my subject. Pure science was never purer; such a training fitted one perfectly to teach it to future teachers.

III

Shaking off the confetti of graduation, alone of my fellow students (who all went on to three years of postgraduate work and subsequent triumphs) I went out into the world that makes use of things — myself of no very great use to

anybody. After the finals I had survived, the civil-service examination seemed deplorably easy. Then I was introduced to my superiors, men cordial, forbearing, helpful.

Novice in something like a religious faith that the flora of North America was the only proper subject of study for North Americans, I went to work under a veteran plantsman who had circled the globe many times in search of beautiful or significant exotics. I learned that there were twenty-seven thousand species of plants in cultivation in my own country, which was more than twice the number of native flowering plants. Thoroughly informed concerning sedges, which are notable for their uselessness, I found myself among men to whom it was inconceivable that one should be so ignorant of the grasses, the most important family that grows upon the earth. Some talked in terms of the range grasses of the great western grazing country, others of winter wheats and spring wheats, hard and soft wheats, spelt and durum, sorghum and broom corn. I was set to work on a survey of the tannin-bearing plants of the world, and I learned for the first time of the great quebracho forests of Argentina, dwindling under the assaults of a tannin-hungry world. I heard of tung oil, in which China held a monopoly until our office set out a valiant plantation in Florida, to supply airplanes with lubricant. The Department was breaking the Japanese grip upon camphor, which is a sinew of war and the body of the flickering film. Dates of Oman for the Imperial Valley, upland rice for the Sacramento Valley, chaulmoogra trees in the uncertain hope of victory over leprosy — these were all Department projects, triumphs ringing fresh when I came into the Office. My horizons seemed suddenly to have leaped away, leaving the world wider, a thousand times more various, infinitely more purposeful and solid than ever I had guessed it might be.

The Office of Foreign Seed and Plant

Introduction was then the most colorful service in the Department. It had been the cradle of the great corps of agricultural explorers who were ransacking the ultimate corners of the earth for new crops or better varieties of old ones. As a packet of rattling, clicking, potent seeds these came to Washington to be set out in experimental stations, propagated, distributed to private collaborators and, at the last, released, if found worthy, to commerce. Or they entered the country as cuttings — a little tied bundle of sticks like the fasces that Romans used to send the people on whom they intended to make war; but this was a war to break, perhaps, the monopoly of some foreign land in camphor or quinine or kapok or fruits. Or the rooted seedlings came, sheltered like traveling babies, in Wardian cases that had crossed the equator to get to us.

And with plants arrived the explorers' letters. They came from Cathay and Samarkand, the Andes and Sokotra, isle of frankincense, aloes, and myrrh. They brought stories of fatigue, frustration, loneliness, and disasters. One explorer had been drowned in the Yangtze, a man perhaps already so drowned in China that when he slipped over the side of the steamer he no longer knew what he did. That man was Frank N. Meyer, Hollander, American, China-man. I thought of him when I opened the letter from the ranch woman in eastern Montana, when I was handling the annual distribution of our plant material. It read:

We got no trees hear. They all blowed down or dide. For God's sake send us shade.

I sent her Meyer's Mongolian elm. It withstands drought, flood, alkali, insects, fungus diseases, searing heat, and killing cold.

Lingering sometimes in the dark of the tall file cases, I overheard the councils of the bigwigs, their voices rumbling just beneath the monotonous roar of the electric fans that flail at Washington's perpetual muggy heat without

ever dispelling it. Talking, in there, might be the old specialist who battled with the cancers of plants, or an authority from Crop Estimates, where they cast up the bread account of the world and foretell who shall starve, who fatten. In the anterooms of the Cotton Rating office I met the representatives of the British Empire wherever it can raise cotton, or Frenchmen talking for Africa. When I went on an errand to Forest Service, I always thought I smelled around the place the raw odor of living timber, cut, or the exciting, frightening scent of smoke. For Forest Service is not concerned alone with conserving fine trees or polishing up cross-cut specimens; its business, I learned, was that of a tremendous fire brigade, and quite as much with the cropping of national timber resources.

Of such was the spell of the Department; no need here to mention its grind. It too had limitations; it had its politics and its crush for preferment; it was bound in its own conventions and unquestionably hobbled in red tape.

But now at any rate I had traveled about a little in two provinces of the plant kingdom. Theory and application were both living realities to me, and either might have offered a practising scientist field for a lifework. If proficient enough, a man could settle down with some comfort into the routine of economic botany, in the thought that he was at all events of practical use.

After these patterns I was not cut. I left the Department for travel of my own mapping.

IV

In some cases the travel was literal, as when I got up into my first alpine pass and saw the whole flowering meadow close its blossoms at a darkening sky. Again it might be a long stay, like those months in a field laboratory under coco palms; there I listened through a microphone to the unearthly, painfully high song of an electric current as it passed

through the saps of tropical trees, by pitch denoting the concentration of their hydrogen ions, and their consequent resistance to frost.

There were summers afield in the dunes, studying less the restless, hissing hills of sand that devour forests alive than reedy lakes behind them where eelgrass and starwort drifted at the surface of the dark water, and wild rice rose to hang out the husky invitation of grass flowers. And I went trotting the bogs after grass-of-Parnassus shaking on hair-fine stems, and pipewort on its pipestems ending in a tight head of grey blossoms — perhaps the strangest stray out of another time and world in all our flora.

But best were long residences. In the flower basket of Provence narcissus grows wild and native, hyacinths dance under the olives, and squills and primroses push beneath the ilex oaks. This is the floral province from which our spring garden has come; it is the same flora that you find in Homer and the Latin bucolics; Linnæus gave it half its scientific names and Darwin studied these same oxlips and bee orchis.

Here a New World naturalist feels that he walks classic ground. But he can add nothing to it; it belongs to Europeans; so he goes back to his own, which is legendless, and vaster.

That was how I came to live for years in an American grove of burr oaks under whose high, elderly, indulgent boughs the little wild plum and crab and the flat-topped hawthorns fume with blossoms that become hard, bright, tangy, and astringent fruits. Seeing one problem, one square mile of land, as a Chinese landscape painter is said to look at one scene for three years until he could paint it in his sleep, I grew aware of greater implications behind the surface of this candid Nature. My newly wakening interest was ecology — loosely defined as the sociology of plants. It describes the aspect and composition of plant communities, and how the environment exerts on them its power. Look deeper,

and there remains to be understood the response within the plant itself that springs from its own nature.

For it was Nature in its deepest sense that, I saw, was the business for me. Precisely because in the green kingdom the law of instinct is not known, the writ of intelligence does not run, plants clearly and unprejudiced tell biologic truth. By that token all flowers are glass flowers (and the coiled fern and the twisted algal tress too), and looking into them the rapt observer sees great first principles composed together there serene as lights in a gem.

V

What we love, when on a summer day we step into the coolness of a wood, is that its boughs close up behind us. We are escaped, into another room of life. The wood does not live as we live, restless and running, panting after flesh, and even in sleep tossing with fears. It is aloof from thoughts and instincts; it responds, but only to the sun and wind, the rock and the stream — never, though you shout yourself hoarse, to propaganda, temptation, reproach, or promises. You cannot mount a rock and preach to a tree how it shall attain the kingdom of heaven. It is already closer to it, up there, than you will grow to be. And you cannot make it see the light, since in the tree's sense you are blind. You have nothing to bring it, for all the forest is self-sufficient; if you burn it, cut, hack through it with a blade, it angrily repairs the swathe with thorns and weeds and fierce suckers. Later there are good green leaves again, toiling, adjusting, breathing — forgetting you.

For this green living is the world's primal industry; yet it makes no roar. Waving its banners, it marches across the earth and the ages, without dust around its columns. I do not hold that all of that life is pretty; it is not, in purpose, sprung for us, and moves under no compulsion to please. If ever you fought

with thistles, or tried to uproot a cat-tail's matted rootstocks, you will know how plants cling to their own lives and defy you. The pond scums gather in the cistern, frothing and buoyed with their own gases; the storm waves fling at your feet upon the beach the limp sea-lettuce wrenched from its submarine hold — reminder that there too, where the light is filtered and refracted, there is life still to intercept and net and by it proliferate. Inland from the shore I look and see the coastal ranges clothed in chaparral — dense shrubbery and scrubbery, close-fisted, intricately branched, suffocating the rash Rambler in the noon heat with its pungency. Beyond, on the deserts, under a fierce sky, between the harsh lunar ranges of unweathered rock, life still, somehow, fights its way through the year, with thorn and succulent cell and indomitable root.

Between such embattled life and the Forest of Arden, with its ancient beeches and enchanter's nightshade, there is no great biologic difference. Each lives by the cool and cleanly and most commendable virtue of being green. And though that is not biological language, it is the whole story in two words. So that we ought not speak of getting at the root of a matter, but of going back to the leaf of things. The orator who knows the way to the country's salvation and does not know that the breath of life he draws was blown into his nostrils by green leaves had better spare his breath. And before anyone builds a new state upon the industrial proletariat, he will be wisely cautioned to discover that the source of all wealth is the peasantry of grass.

And the reason for these assertions — which I do not make for metaphorical effect but maintain quite literally — is that the green leaf pigment, called chlorophyll, is the one link between the sun and life; it is the conduit of perpetual energy to our own frail organisms.

For inert and inorganic elements — water and carbon dioxide of the air, the same that we breathe out as a waste —

chlorophyll can synthesize with the energy of sunlight. Every day, every hour of all the ages, as each continent and, equally important, each ocean rolls into sunlight, chlorophyll ceaselessly creates. Not figuratively, but literally, in the grand First Chapter Genesis style. One instant there are a gas and a water, as lifeless as the core of earth or the chill of space; and the next they are become living tissue — mortal yet genitive, progenitive, resilient with all the dewy adaptability of flesh, ever changing in order to stabilize some unchanging ideal of form. Life, in short, synthesized, plant-synthesized, light-synthesized. Botanists say photosynthesized. So that the post-Biblical synthesis of life is already a fact. Only when man has done as much may he call himself the equal of a weed.

Plant life sustains the living world; more precisely, chlorophyll does so, and where, in the vegetable kingdom, there is not chlorophyll or something closely like it, then that plant or cell is a parasite — no better, in vital economy, than a mere animal or man. Blood, bone, and sinew, all flesh is grass. Grass to mutton, mutton to wool, wool to the coat on my back — it runs like one of those cumulative nursery rhymes, the wealth and diversity of our material life accumulating from the primal fact of chlorophyll's activity. The roof of my house, the snapping logs upon the hearth, the desk where I write, are my imports from the plant kingdom. But the whole of modern civilization is based upon a whirlwind spending of the plant wealth long ago and very slowly accumulated. For fundamentally, and away back, coal and oil, gasoline and illuminating gas, had green origins too. With the exception of a small amount of water power, a still smaller of wind and tidal mills, the vast machinery of our complex living is driven only by these stores of plant energy.

We, then, the animals, consume those stores in our restless living. Serenely the plants amass them. They turn light's active energy to food, which is potential

energy stored for their own benefit. Only if the daisy is browsed by the cow, the maple leaf sucked of its juices by an insect, will that green leaf become of our kind. So we get the song of a bird at dawn, the speed in the hoofs of the fleeing deer, the noble thought in the philosopher's mind. So Plato's Republic was builded on leeks and cabbages.

Animal life lives always in the red; the favorable balance is written on the other side of life's page, and it is written in chlorophyll. All else obeys the thermodynamic law that energy forever runs downhill, is lost and degraded. In economic language, this is the law of diminishing returns, and it is obeyed by the cooling stars as by man and all the animals. They float down its Lethe stream. Only chlorophyll fights up against the current. It is the stuff in life that rebels at death, that has never surrendered to entropy, final icy stagnation. It is the mere cobweb on which we are all suspended over the abyss.

VI

And what then is this substance which is not itself alive but is made by life and makes life, and is never found apart from life?

I remember the first time I ever held it, in the historic dimness of the old Agassiz laboratories, pure, in my hands. My teacher was an owl-eyed master, with a chuckling sense of humor, who had been trained in the greatest laboratory in Germany, and he believed in doing the great things first. So on the first day of his course he set us to extracting chlorophyll, and I remember that his eyes blinked amusement behind his glasses, because when he told us all to go and collect green leaves and most walked all the way to the Yard for grass, I opened the window and stole from a vine upon the wall a handful of Harvard's sacred ivy.

We worked in pairs, and my fellow student was a great-grandnephew, or

something of the sort, of Elias Fries, the founder of the study of fungi. Together we boiled the ivy leaves, then thrust them in alcohol. After a while it was the leaves which were colorless while the alcohol had become green. We had to dilute this extract with water, and then we added benzol, because this will take the chlorophyll away from the alcohol which, for its part, very conveniently retains the yellow pigments also found in leaves. This left us with a now yellowish alcohol and, floating on top of it, a thick green benzol; you could simply decant the latter carefully off into a test tube, and there you had chlorophyll extract, opaque, trembling, heavy, a little viscous and oily, and smelling, but much too rankly, like a lawn-mower's blades after a battle with rainy grass.

Then, in a darkened room where beams from a spectroscope escaped in painful darts of light as from the cracks in an old-fashioned magic lantern, we peered at our extracted chlorophyll through prisms. Just as in a crystal chandelier the sunlight is shattered to a rainbow, so in the spectroscope light is spread out in colored bands — a long narrow ribbon, sorting the white light by wave lengths into its elemental parts. And the width, the presence or the absence, of each cross-band on the ribbon tells the tale of a chemical element present in the spectrum, much as the bands on a soldier's insignial ribbon show service in Asia, in the tropics, on the border, in what wars. When the astronomer has fixed spectroscope instead of telescope upon a distant star, he reads off the color bands as easily as one soldier reads another's, and will tell you whether sodium or oxygen, helium or iron, is present.

Just so our chlorophyll revealed its secrets. The violet and blue end of the spectrum was almost completely blacked out. And that meant that chlorophyll absorbed and used these high-frequency waves. So, too, the red and orange were largely obliterated, over at the right-

hand side of our telltale bar. It was the green that came through clearly. So we call plants green because they use that color least. It is what they reject as fast as it smites the upper cells; it is what they turn back, reflect, flash into our grateful retinas.

It was only routine in a young botanist's training to make an extraction and spectrum analysis of chlorophyll. My student friends over in the chemistry laboratories were more excited than I about it. They were working under Conant, before he became president of Harvard and had to sneak into his old laboratory at night with a key he still keeps. For chlorophyll was Conant's own problem. His diagram of its structure, displayed to me by his students, was closely worked over with symbols and signs, unfolded to something like the dimensions of a blueprint of Boulder Dam, and made clear — to anyone who could understand it! — how the atoms are arranged and deployed and linked in such a tremendous molecule as $\text{MgN}_4\text{C}_{55}\text{H}_{72}\text{O}_5$.

To Otto and Alfred and Mort every jot and joint in the vast Rube Goldberg machinery of that structural formula had meaning, and more than meaning — the geometrical beauty of the one right, inevitable position for every atom. To me, a botanist's apprentice, a future naturalist, there was just one fact to quicken the pulse. That fact is the close similarity between chlorophyll and hemoglobin, the essence of our blood.

So that you may lay your hand upon the smooth flank of a beech and say, 'We be of one blood, brother, thou and I.'

The one significant difference in the two structural formulas is this: that the hub of every hemoglobin molecule is one atom of iron, while in chlorophyll it is one atom of magnesium.

Iron is strong and heavy, clamorous when struck, avid of oxygen and capable of corruption. It does not surprise us by its presence in our blood stream. Magnesium is a light, silvery, unresonant metal;

its density is only one seventh that of iron, it has half of iron's molecular weight, and melts at half the temperature. It is rustless, ductile, and pliant; it burns with a brilliant white light rich in actinic rays, and is widely distributed through the upper soil, but only, save at mineral springs, in dainty quantities. Yet the plant succeeds always in finding that mere trace that it needs, even when a chemist might fail to detect it.

How does the chlorophyll, green old alchemist that it is, transmute the dross of earth into living tissue? Its hand is swifter than the chemist's most sensitive analyses. In theory, the step from water and carbon dioxide to the formation of sugar (the first result readily discerned) must involve several syntheses; yet it goes on in a split hundredth of a second. One sunlight particle or photon strikes the chlorophyll, and instantaneously the terribly tenacious molecule of water, which we break down into its units of hydrogen and oxygen only with difficulty and expense, is torn apart; so too is the carbon dioxide molecule. Building blocks of the three elements, carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, are then whipped at lightning speed into carbonic acid; this is instantly changed over into formic acid—the same that smarts so in our nerve endings when an ant stings us. No sooner formed than formic acid becomes formaldehyde and hydrogen peroxide. This last is poisonous, but a ready enzyme in the plant probably splits it as fast as it is born into harmless water and oxygen, while the formaldehyde is knocked at top speed into a new pattern—and is grape sugar, glucose. And all before you can say Albert Einstein. Indeed, by the time you have said Theophrastus Bombastus Aureolus Paracelsus von Hohenheim, the sugar may have lost a modicum of water—and turned into starch, the first product of photosynthesis that could be detected by the methods of fifty years ago.

At this very instant, with the sun delivering to its child the earth, in the

bludgeoning language of mathematics, 215×10^{15} calories per second, photosynthesis is racing along wherever the leaf can reach the light. (All else goes to waste.) True, its efficiency is very low—averaging no better than 1 per cent, while our machines are delivering up to 25 per cent of the fuel they combust. But that which they burn—coal and gas, oils and wood—was made, once, by leaves in ancient geologic times. The store of such energy is strictly finite. Chlorophyll alone is hitched to what is, for earthly purposes, the infinite.

Light, in the latest theory, is not waves in a sea of ether, or a jet from a nozzle; it could be compared rather to machine-gun fire, every photoelectric bullet of energy traveling in regular rhythm, at a speed that bridges the astronomical gap in eight minutes. As each bullet hits an electron of chlorophyll it sets it to vibrating, at its own rate, just as one tuning fork, when struck, will cause another to hum in the same pitch. A bullet strikes—and one electron is knocked galley-west into a dervish dance like the madness of the atoms in the sun. The energy splits open chlorophyll molecules, recombines their atoms, and lies there, dormant, in foods.

The process seems miraculously adjusted. And yet, like most living processes, it is not perfect. The reaction time of chlorophyll is not geared as high as the arrival of the light-bullets. Light comes too fast; plants, which are the very children of light, can get too much of it. Exposure to the sunlight on the Mojave Desert is something that not a plant in my garden, no, nor even the wiry brush in the chaparral, could endure. Lids against the light plants do not have; but by torsions of the stalk some leaves may turn their blades edge-on to dazzling radiation, and present them again broadside in failing light. Within others the chlorophyll granules too, bun or pellet-shaped as they are, can roll for a side or frontal exposure toward the light. In others they can

crowd to the top of a cell and catch faint rays, or sink or flee to the sides to escape a searing blast.

In their requirements, their tolerances, their blindnesses, leaves are much like our human eyes. As we cannot behold the infra-red rays, and call them darkness, so the plant does not avail itself of them; it is not too much to say that it is blind to them. Ultra-violet rays are dangerous to us; they may impart deep burns. The leaf too can neither use these high vibrations nor much endure them. Photosynthesis proceeds best at very nearly the temperatures we find supportable. Leaves must have drink, as we must; they must breathe oxygen, as we breathe it. They have tender youth, and strong maturity, fragile age, and death — a skeleton in the ground, that at last is mould.

VII

When I began to write these pages, before breakfast, the little fig tree outside my window was rejoicing in the early morning light. It is a special familiar of my work, a young tree that has never yet borne fruit. It is but a little taller than I, has only two main branches and forty-three twigs, and the brave if not impressive sum of two hundred and sixteen leaves — I have touched every one with a counting finger. Though sparse, they are large, mitten-shaped, richly green with chlorophyll. I compute, by measuring the leaf and counting both sides, that my little tree has a leaf surface of about eighty-four square feet. This sun-trap was at work to-day long before I.

Those uplifted hand-like leaves caught the first sky light. It was poor for the fig's purpose, but plant work begins from a nocturnal zero. When I came to my desk the sun was full upon those leaves — and it is a wondrous thing how they are disposed so that they do

not shade each other. By the blazing California noon, labor in the leaves must have faltered from very excess of light; all the still golden afternoon it went on; now as the sun sets behind a sea fog the little fig slackens peacefully at its task.

Yet in the course of a day it has made sugars for immediate burning and energy release, put by a store of starch for future use; with the addition of nitrogen and other salts brought up in water from the roots it has built proteins too — the very bricks and mortar of the living protoplasm, and the perdurable stuff of permanent tissue. The annual growth ring in the wood of stem and twigs has widened an infinitesimal but a real degree. The fig is one day nearer to its coming of age, to flowering and fruiting. Then, still leafing out each spring, still toiling in the sunlight that I shall not be here to see, it may go on a century and more, growing eccentric, solidifying whimsies, becoming a friend to generations. It will be 'the old fig' then. And at last it may give up the very exertion of bearing. It will lean tough elbows in the garden walks, and gardeners yet unborn will scold it and put up with it. But still it will leaf out till it dies.

Dusk is here now. So I switch on the lamp beside my desk. The powerhouse burns its thousand tons of coal a week, and gives us this instant and most marvelous current. But that light is not new. It was hurled out of the sun, two hundred million years ago, and was captured by the leaves of the Carboniferous fern-tree forests, fell with the falling plant, was buried, fossilized, dug up, and resurrected. It is the same light. And, in my little fig tree as in the ancient ferns, it is the same unchanging green stuff from age to age, passed without perceptible improvement from evolving plant to plant. What it is and does, so complex upon examination, lies about us tranquil and simple, with the simplicity of a miracle.

(A second installment of 'The Flowering Seed' will appear in the October issue)

LOOK IN YOUR GLASS

BY RUTH GORDON

[RUTH GORDON is an American actress who has captivated many an audience in New York and London. Twenty-five years ago Ruth Gordon Jones was a stage-struck senior at the Quincy High School. She still has in her possession her schoolgirl Diary, and, using it as a point of departure, she tells her own unforgettable story of 1914. She lived in a shabby double house at 14 Elmwood Avenue, Wollaston, Massachusetts, where, she says, 'my mother and father and I and our cat hoped, dreamed, and somehow scrimped along on \$37.50 a week, which my father earned as foreman at the Mellin's Food factory in Boston.'

The first installment of Miss Gordon's chronicle appeared in the *Atlantic* for August. — THE EDITOR]

MY DIARY

(For the year 1914, my Senior Year at Q.H.S.)

January 10. — This afternoon Kay Follett and I went to see Ethel Barrymore in *Tante*. She is wonderful. I have never seen such superb acting as hers. The whole caste gave marvellously finished work. Miss Barrymore's costumes were wonderful. The play is the most interesting I have seen this season. Afterwards we were undecided whether we needed a nine cent monocle or a ten cent soda more but we finally went to Bailey's and indulged in ice cream.

My playgoing days in Boston started when I was two years old. This was not an early New England custom. I was taken because of my parents' thrift.

They had bought seats for themselves and a guest, and the guest had defaulted when it was too late to get someone else. It was not likely that a theatre ticket was going to be wasted, and so I was hastily mustered out. The play was *Secret Service*, starring William Gillette, and I am sure that I had a good time.

Perhaps on this January afternoon we went in style and sat in the balcony or orchestra. I really do not remember. But all the rest of my Boston playgoing was enjoyed from high up in the gallery. Its more affectionate titles were 'peanut gallery' or 'nigger heaven.' We know them no more, for, along with the demise of the gallery, they too have gone. Heaven it surely was, but it seems partisan to limit it to any one color, race, or creed. Peanuts I never saw eaten there. Candy was the fashion in the gallery as in all other parts of the theatre. It was considered almost as necessary an adjunct to a matinee as one's clean handkerchief or best gloves. Many theatres provided boxes of chocolates attached to the backs of the seats, and by dropping ten cents or a quarter in the slot those who had come unprepared were spared by a kindly management from going unnourished during the performance.

Gallery seats cost fifty cents except on rare occasions. I paid only a quarter to see Olive Wyndham in *What Happened to Mary*, but we were tucked away so close to the ceiling of the Majestic Theatre that it was hard to tell just

what *did* happen to her. Anyway we saw something or other and had the satisfaction of knowing that we were at a play. Besides, it allowed us to put by something towards a fifty-cent ticket, and all in all we had a jolly good time.

Another play that we saw for a quarter was a furious melodrama called *The Whip*. It was at the old Boston Theatre, and our seats were in the third gallery, which was so high up that only an eagle could have felt comfortable there. It was like looking down on Jaffrey from the top of Mount Monadnock. Fortunately *The Whip* did not go in for subtlety, although perhaps I was in no position to judge, for about the best we could do was to hang on to our seats and try not to look at the stage too often, because looking down that far made us dizzy. We could distinguish the horse race from the nobility, and that was about all.

The great thrill came when we were lucky enough to get seats in the front row of the gallery, but these were usually sold out in advance, and I never could tell ahead of time when I and my fifty cents were going to catch up with one another.

Seated so high up, I always saw the stage from an odd angle, which lent a curious perspective to a play. Looking down that way gave us a fine view of the actors' feet, but denied us the top part of the scenery. Probably most of the time the top part looked the same as the rest of it, but in *Tante* we were handicapped, for the actors kept referring to a statue which seemed to be up over a door. This statue, they claimed, had a curious effect on them, and I dare say it would have had a curious effect on me too if I could have seen it, but even though I got down on the floor and twisted about there, that statue could not be viewed for fifty cents. We knew it was all right, of course, because Ethel Barrymore, herself, said that it was up there.

January 11. — Today it was cold and windy but I went to church. I didn't meet Florence Crowell, as she was late, so I sat with Gladys Glover and her mother. Afterwards I went up and saw her pictures of Jane Cowl, Emily Stevens, and Leonore Harris. They are great. We had perfectly terrible lessons in Latin, German, and English so I studied all the rest of the day.

When one is seventeen and stage-struck, mail is magic, for the postman may bring a brown photo mailer in which is a signed picture of an actress.

On my bedroom walls were signed pictures of Billie Burke, Anna Pavlowa, Violet Heming, Gaby Deslys, Julia Sanderson, Hazel Dawn, Doris Olsson, and some others whose names I have forgotten, although I can hardly believe it, for this collection was my dearest possession. The list does not represent all my adored ones. Many of my favorites did not answer my letters, but lack of response did not discourage me. I simply wrote again. 'The fault lies not in the stars, but in myself,' was my motto, and to my ensuing letters I gave even more thought, more effort, and more compliments, all genuine and all straight from the heart.

Often my favorites were recalcitrant. I had a hard uphill struggle with Billie Burke, but since she was one of my premier idols, lack of response merely increased my enthusiasm for the task. Anyone who could say 'Muffins?' as adorably as she did in *The Mind-the-Paint Girl* should not be expected to answer her mail at once. My second letter brought no more response than the first, but memories of her in *The Amazons* singing 'My Otaheitee Lady' spurred me on to put pen to paper for the third time and begin 'PLEASE, dear Miss Burke!' This broke down her resistance. Her signed photograph arrived.

Maude Adams never replied, no matter how many times I wrote, and two years later, when I was a member of her company, I was so awed by her presence

that I did not dare to ask for her picture. Instead, I bought it from Moffett, the Chicago photographer. Even then I did not ask her to autograph it. Miss Adams was a queen in her kingdom, and one does not say to royalty, 'Please sign here.'

This bought picture might seem of little interest, but to me it was precious, for it was the only actress's picture I had ever owned which toured in a Pullman car, occupied and paid for by 'the Lady' herself. I still have it along with two others which are all that remain of my Wollaston collection. For alas, 'Dust unto dust'; but who could have foreseen that such immediate dust would beshroud my treasures?

When we had to break up our home and I went to New York to see life from a hall bedroom in the Three Arts Club, I had to dispose of all my belongings to the secondhand dealer. Among the things not appreciated by this Cold Heart was my collection of actresses' pictures. So on one August day I carried them down to the dump on Fayette Street and left them there. That day was made bearable by the knowledge that I was going to New York to become an actress myself.

January 14. — Today I never came so near freezing before. I thought I should die walking home from school with the temperature 4 degrees below. All day it was below zero. I have a dreadful cold and this afternoon Kay Follett came down and we studied, then Mother made tea for us. Going out to the P.O. for the mail we agreed not to go to school tomorrow. Really I've got a dreadful cold and it's so cold at school.

Apparently my own cold and the cold at school were not too dreadful, for, though the thermometer registered below zero, I walked to the post office without any urging, and surely the temperature of our classrooms could not have been below zero. Perhaps I felt that my education might be postponed for a day without doing any damage.

At five-thirty in the evening a late mail arrived at our post office, and this was held over until our postman, Mr. Mullins, delivered it on his morning rounds. Naturally this was unsatisfactory to anyone like myself, expecting such important communications. My actresses' pictures were my first concern, but there were other worth-while things as well. I might be going to get a letter from Virginia Royall. Suppose Gladys Bain had troubled to write me the latest news from Wellesley College. Possibly I might hear from my sister, Clare, off teaching school in Washington, although of course that was hardly important, as she was only my sister. Perhaps Jordan, Marsh was sending me samples of yellow messaline or Dorothy Dainty ribbons; now and then I made such requests if my mail was going through a slack period.

And so, with all this to look forward to, I walked to the post office every evening at five-thirty. It was a nice time to be out; there was no telling whom I might run into; and it was an entertaining trip, for it took me past Wollaston's shopping district, which spread out over two blocks. Starting on Brook Street was the Chinese laundry, which was not too entertaining a beginning, although it had its feeble points. Most people thought that a Chinese laundry was perfectly all right, but there was a small faction who claimed that the Chinaman, instead of sprinkling his laundry with a bulb which squirted out water, took a big mouthful himself, when no one was looking, and blew it out on to whosever shirt he was about to iron. I cannot say how people knew this, since they claimed he did it only when no one was looking, and it hardly seems the sort of thing that the Chinaman himself would be likely to boast about. At any rate, it lent interest, when passing his window, to see if one could catch him at his primitive tricks.

Next came the tailor's, and a store which was always vacant except now and then when Charity used it for a cake or

rummage sale. Across the street was Mr. Macfarlane's bicycle and hardware store. His son Arthur and I were in the same class at school. Nothing much to look at here, since my own bicycle had fallen apart publicly in Quincy Square right opposite the church where two presidents are buried. There was no hope of buying a new one, so why look at them on display? I think Mr. Stephenson's plumbing shop was along here, too. We all liked the Stephensons, and Mrs. Stephenson was a patroness of our dancing class. Back on the other side of the street was Mr. Snowden's Cash Market, which was where the entertaining part of my walk began, for food displays have always seemed to me a very pleasant sight. Mr. Snowden formerly worked for our grocer, Mr. Backus, and my mother said that although she was glad to see him getting on she *did* miss him at Mr. Backus's, because he was always obliging when we wanted to take back anything.

The bakery joined Mr. Snowden's, and here was something not only to look at but to smell as well. His plates of cupcakes and crullers fairly made one's mouth water, especially at this time of evening just before supper. My mother worried about the bakery man because he looked pale and tired. She thought it must be because he had to do his baking down cellar underneath his store, or else perhaps he was too economical to buy meat, and ate up his leftovers instead.

Beside the bakery was Mrs. Grant's dry-goods and notion shop. Mrs. Grant and her daughter Alta were pleasant acquaintances of ours. Alta seemed to me to be in an enviable position, for she had free access to all the jabots and frills in her mother's store. This window called for a halt in my walk so that I could *really* rubber at all the novelties on display.

Around the corner on Newport Avenue was a chain store, which had a spandynew look that made it unique in our town. People said that they sold things cheap there, but we did not patronize

them because we did not know who they were. We did not know the baker either, but at least we knew that it was his store, and in Wollaston it did not seem friendly to shop in a place that appeared to have no owner except just some corporation or other.

Close to the snubbed chain store was Hardy's jewelry store, which we patronized once when my mother's jewelry became unglued. It was a hand-painted portrait of Beatrice Cenci set in a brooch, and Mr. Hardy stuck it back into its gold hoop frame. He took such trouble with it and discussed it so politely that whenever my mother wore it after that she told people about Mr. Hardy's interest, and said that she really would not be surprised at all if it turned out to be something quite valuable. Mr. Hardy's show window was another halt in my walk; everything in it would have made wonderful presents: signet rings, locketts and chains, watches on fleur-de-lis pins, mother-of-pearl paper cutters, and other flighty attractions.

Next door was Mr. N. G. Nickerson's real-estate office. My father said that N. G. stood for *no good*, but I think that this was a snap judgment. Mr. Nickerson had formerly been our landlord when we lived in the house on the hill, but I do not think he did anything *no good* to us, except to raise the rent.

After Mr. Nickerson's came a store which took orders for coal and fire insurance and had to do with deeds and titles. It had a window display which was at once simple and original: a small grate full of some newfangled thing called coal briquets, which looked like black cement snowballs.

After this novelty came something a little more conventional—the show window of Mr. Gilbert Shunk's periodical, stationery, and tobacco store. His sister Alice helped him to run it, and either she or Gilbert had been to school with my sister, so of course we had known them for years. I used to hang about their magazine counter on the lamest of

excuses, peeking into the pages of *Bon Ton* or the *Elite* to see what gorgeous styles Paris was wearing. But in spite of this thrill Mr. Shunk's store was not always an unalloyed pleasure. My father used to send me there to buy his Dill's Plug Cut Tobacco, which seemed a rather unnecessary humiliation. I fussed about it to my mother until finally she told him that it did not look nice for me to be buying tobacco, because I was growing up. With some asperity and a few well-chosen words, my father made it clear that he felt I could continue this trifling service and, if I played my cards right, might still manage to mature without in any way forfeiting the respect of the community. With such a premise I cannot think how his side lost. I know it was a tussle, but my mother's pleas finally brought him to bay.

As if to make up for the seamy side of Mr. Shunk's, next door was the candy store, with one whole window full of marshmallow bananas, Squirrel Nut Bars, peppermint heart tokens, and some chocolate marshmallow mice, with tails of paraffined string. It was kind of somebody to take such trouble, for they tasted much better than just plain shapeless chocolate marshmallows, though of course the paraffined string was excess baggage, because even *we* did not attempt to eat that. Here too were licorice whips, sticks of O. K. Chewing Gum, whip-cream caramels, and some untrustworthy confection which looked like large cone-shaped gumdrops, but, when bitten into, spilled out on one's dress a sticky syrup called liquor. Much safer, if one cared to remain tidy, was a pink waxen candy which came in a small fluted metal frying pan with a tiny spoon embedded in the candy, the better to give us lead poisoning.

The candy shop was near the top of the hill, and after it came the barber shop and the old Wollaston Hotel, which had been closed up for years. I think my mother told me that it had once flourished with a liquor license in the

old days, when tallyho parties used to stop there and raise ructions on their way to and from Brockton Fair. But in my time it was always boarded up and wore a sinister look, as if it lodged ghosts of its own wicked past. On the corner by the hotel I turned left and crossed the railroad bridge, a weather-beaten old structure which shook so, when a train passed beneath it, that it seemed eager to fall apart. Just beyond it, clinging to the down side of the hill, was my destination, our post office, a low clapboarded building painted red with a buff trim. It was only one room, with a partition between the public and our Civil Service, but it was as open and aboveboard as could be, for all we had to do was look through the General Delivery window to see all the wheels go round. Sometimes our Mr. Mullins would still be there, smoking his pipe and cooling off or thawing out, depending on whatever season we happened to be in. But he was off duty and just enjoying himself, so it was our postmaster, Mr. Burns, who usually took care of our wants.

Mr. Burns was just about the most affable man in Wollaston. He could always be relied on to take tickets for church sociables and school entertainments, and once when I was a little girl he paid me five cents for a bouquet of dandelions, which was very kind, for his own front lawn had been so full of them that I cannot believe he needed any more. Mr. Burns seemed to take it as a compliment whenever people came into the post office, and he met them with a pleasant face whether they were buying stamps or irately trying to trace a lost parcel.

Even before Mr. Burns gave me his attention at the General Delivery window I knew if there was any hope of a letter, for I could see the rows of wooden pigeonholes running along the wall, and if there was anything in the box marked J there was a chance that it might be for me, rather than for any other J in

the Down-in-the-Plains Section. If it was for me, then every cloud was rosy, and if it turned out to be an actress's picture I took it all the way home before I opened it, to torment myself as long as it was humanly possible with anticipation of what it would look like.

There were long stretches, of course, when I did not receive anything at all, not even so much as a sample, and during one of these dull periods I had occasion to regard Mr. Burns and his friendliness with something less than relish. One evening he said to me, plaintively: 'I've been trying and trying to figure it out. Tell me, for heaven sakes, Ruth, what on earth is it you're *expecting*?'

At that moment I could have done with less friendliness in our Postal Department and more *laissez faire* in regard to my mail. But, even allowing for Mr. Burns's forwardness, it was a pleasant world to walk in, where we knew all the people and they knew us, and because they lived in Wollaston they must be nice people, for the bad people were all in the newspapers and nobody *ever* knew them.

January 14. — Today Kay and I did stay at home and my cold is quite bad; it makes me look like a perfect fright. Kay spent the day with me and we studied and wrote letters. Later she went home to pay the coal man and then came down again. We made tea ourselves. It was fun. Anna has typhoid pneumonia. Poor child!

I think the news that Anna Witham had typhoid pneumonia did not seem as important to me as the fact that Kay Follett went home to pay the coal bill. Anna Witham's family was rich and she could afford typhoid pneumonia, but the Folletts were not rich and yet Kay went home to pay their coal bill just like that. It impressed me, because our own coal bill was a horrible bugbear which hung over us soon after Labor Day until whatever glorious date it was paid. Fourteen Elmwood Avenue knew several devils, but I think the coal bill led off.

Sometimes my father would refer to coal as 'black diamonds,' and sometimes as something less printable. But whatever way he chose to mention it was a reliable barometer of his feelings. Ordinarily one would not expect coal to be a topic of conversation, once it was stowed away in the cellar, but our attitude was not quite so fickle. Thoughtless we may have been in many respects, but no one could say that we put our coal away and forgot it.

Soon after its arrival we would all go down cellar to look at it, piled prosperously high in the bin and spreading out even beyond its own confines, towards the general direction of the jelly closet. It looked handsome and shiny and important, and gave us a feeling of astonishment that we could buy anything so big. My father would take a seat on the chopping block and survey his property with pride, which was as it should be, for next to my mother's engagement ring it was the most valuable thing that we owned. But after the first pleasant shock of possession had started to wear off, my father would remember about the bill for such a heap of Nature's Wonders, and he would incline to grow moody. In spite of all we might do to distract him, his moodiness soon turned to melancholy, and he would groan and wonder if it was *all* coal, or if the inside might not turn out to be clinkers.

'Better take a good look at it,' he would advise us dourly, 'because what's goin' to happen *next* year God alone only knows, and He won't tell.'

'Clinton!' my mother would say automatically, for by now she was more or less reconciled to my father's disparagement of the Almighty.

'Wag your head all you want to,' he continued, 'but the fact remains that He won't. Next year we might all be out pickin' it up off the railroad tracks. It's a blessin' they're handy. Even lazy as Ruth is, it can't strain her to only walk a block.'

'Oh, Clinton,' my mother remon-

strated gently, 'you do love to look on the gloomy side.'

'Well, hell! History repeats itself, don't it?' he demanded with asperity. 'It was gloomy all right, *all right*, gettin' coal the year the *Portland* went down. And we ain't got no Charlie Bryant for mayor, now. Price of coal was so steep *that* year it was cheaper to die and get buried, until Charlie Bryant went and bought a whole carload out of his own pocketbook, had it set on a sidin' up West Quincy way, and invited everybody who wasn't too frozen to dip in free of charge.'

'Oh, wasn't that lovely!' exclaimed my mother admiringly. 'That was a *beautiful* thing for him to do! And I always liked *Mrs.* Bryant, too. Years ago she gave me a recipe for chocolate sauce.'

My father arose from his seat on the chopping block and favored her with a withering glare. 'I know I don't like this *town*,' he said decisively. 'It's got rents higher than Babylon's Hangin' Gardens, and you can't walk a mile in any direction without endin' up in a swamp.'

My mother and I recognized storm signals and set our course of behavior accordingly, for in a conversation starting on this level one thing was apt to lead to another, and before the evening was over we, as well as Wollaston, were likely to be in the line of direct fire.

January 16. — Today Miss Zeller did not come to school and so Kay and I walked down to Quincy Square with Miss O'Neill. She was too sweet for anything! I certainly love her. She talked to *me* most of the time. I was certainly tickled. Afterwards Kay and I went over to Mrs. Nickerson's. Mr. N. and William came in later. William was quite unthawed, but Mr. N. is the flower of that flock.

Mr. N., the flower of the flock, is not the Mr. N. G. Nickerson, our former landlord. The two families were not related. The Flower of the Flock and *his* Nickerson family had recently moved to

Wollaston and bought the Page house on the hill. Mrs. Nickerson was a pleasant lady whom I enjoyed calling on. Sometimes I would be welcome and sometimes the maid, looking quite dishonest, would say that Mrs. Nickerson was not at home. But when Mrs. Nickerson did receive me she was very nice and I enjoyed my call, in spite of the fact that she kept me in a continual state of suspense, for she was forever throwing out invitations for some permanently indefinite date. I must come for dinner *some night*; I must lunch with her one of these days; I must visit their summer home at Megansett; I must do this and that and go to the theatre with them and goodness knows what all. But either Mrs. Nickerson loved to torment me, or else her vitality gave out along with the invitation.

Only once did any of these pleasant suggestions turn out to be more than a promise. During the winter when I was in New York, studying at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, Mrs. Nickerson arrived in town and put up at the Hotel Prince George. She invited me to lunch with her at the Mary Elizabeth Tea Room and actually set a definite day and hour. It seemed as though there must be a catch in it somewhere, and I felt almost baffled when Mrs. Nickerson showed up promptly and the engagement went off according to Hoyle. After feeding me so kindly, she took me shopping next door at Best's, and there almost killed me with kindness by buying me a rose linen shirtwaist with two rosebuds cross-stitched on the collar. It was so beautiful that I could hardly wait to get home with it and bedazzle the Three Arts Club girls. Mrs. Nickerson seemed to me a cross between the greatest living benefactress and Saint Elizabeth of roses-and-loaves fame.

Lost in admiration of how beautiful I should soon be in my new finery, I was suddenly brought back to earth with a wallop, as I heard Mrs. Nickerson say, 'I'll have it sent to the Prince George

and you can come down there and call for it.' I *knew* everything had been going too well. My heart sank, but I managed to protest half-heartedly that it would be no trouble at all to carry my shirtwaist home with me. Mrs. Nickerson was firm, however, and so I took leave of my treasure, as I thought sadly of how it had almost been *really* mine.

Some days later Mrs. Nickerson wrote that she must return home but would leave the shirtwaist in the parcel room of the Prince George. 'No parcel for Miss Ruth Gordon,' the attendant assured me, and I felt that I ought to have known this would happen, and saved myself the trip downtown.

But the vision of that rose-colored waist did not leave me. Six months passed and still I thought about it, for I was now frantically looking for a job and it seemed to me if only I had pretty clothes it might be easier to get past the outer office boy and convince some manager that I could become an actress if he would only give me a chance.

One evening I was left with no place to go and no money to go there, for, owing to an unpaid board bill, even the Three Arts Club had to be avoided until after the Matron had gone to bed. I wandered here and there, and without any particular thought in mind, except to kill a little time, I drifted around to the Prince George. Strolling leisurely over to the parcel room, I said to the man in charge, 'Are you *sure* you haven't any parcel for Miss Ruth Gordon?' The man was sure so quickly that it was astonishing how little time had been killed. 'There wouldn't be a parcel there for Miss Ruth Jones either, would there?' I improvised hastily, in order to prolong the visit. The man looked at me as though I were trifling with him, but he referred once more to his book, then got a stepladder and rummaged around in a top closet. At last he brought down a parcel with such a thick coat of dust on it that it looked as if it were wrapped up in gray squirrel fur.

Mrs. Nickerson had forgotten my stage name and I had all but forgotten my real one, but what's in a name? My rose linen shirtwaist was mine at last. In spite of its late December blooming, it came in handier even than if it had flowered in season, and Mrs. Nickerson proved to be truly my benefactress in a way to make up for all former disappointments. A very wonderful thing happened: I sold it for a dollar, which paid for a good many carfares between the Three Arts Club and the managers' offices.

Previous to my windfall, the question of whether I walked from West 85th Street to the vicinity of Times Square was largely determined by whether some solvent Three Arts Club member had left a nickel or two lying handy in her pin tray. Perhaps this will explain to the young ladies who lived there during the winter of 1915 why their pin trays were so often empty when they returned home at night. I wish I knew where they all lived now, so that I might send them my thanks and explain that it was not the walking I minded, but the hole was getting so large in the bottom of my shoe. Mrs. Nickerson's gift saved much wear and tear on my conscience and footgear alike.

January 18. — Today, altho the sun was shining gaily, I didn't go to church because I had to write an essay which I have to use for a speech in English tomorrow. This afternoon I washed my hair. I've been playing the piano all day learning 'Kiss Me Good Night' and 'Get Out and Get Under.'

'Kiss Me Good Night' I cannot remember, but 'Get Out and Get Under' was a song about a young man who had trouble with his automobile.

I wonder if my mother, hearing these pieces, thought of all her labors that had brought me to this doubtful peak of musicianship, for it was through her efforts that I learned to play at all. She had wanted me to have all the accomplishments, and although there was no

money to be spent on acquiring them, there was labor to be bartered, and when it came to hard work my mother did not stint herself.

When I was seven years old she started me taking piano lessons from Mrs. Percy Moorehouse, who was rated the best teacher in Wollaston. My mother arranged with Mrs. Moorehouse to sew one day a week for her and in return Mrs. Moorehouse was to give me two half-hour lessons. My mother was bubbling over with excitement at this deal, and talked about it all the way home. 'But don't you go telling your father I'm going to sew for Mrs. Moorehouse,' she warned me.

'Why?' I asked. 'Wouldn't he like it?'

'Oh, well,' she said vaguely, 'you know how your father is,' and, just in case I did not know, she gave me a nickel to keep my mouth shut.

Almost immediately I took part in a concert which Mrs. Moorehouse's pupils gave in our teacher's front parlor. I wore my best rosebud dimity and my blue glass Venetian beads, which were hardly ever allowed out of their cotton-wool wrappings because my mother said they were so valuable. On my middle finger was my turquoise ring which Aunt Ela Simpson had given me when I was a baby. She had bought it for me to grow to, and in those baby days I had to have it tied on with a ribbon which ended up in a bow at my wrist, but by now it had gotten so tight that I could endure the pain of it only occasionally. My mother urged me to try and put up with it this afternoon because I might never be asked to appear in a concert again. I sat stiffly in one of Mrs. Moorehouse's chairs, which turned out to be a very ticklish proposition. I envied the other pupils the protection of their longer dresses, for where my petticoat ruffle ended and my stockings began was causing me no end of trouble. From the parents' side of the room, my mother gave me a constant series of winks and

nods all bearing definite suggestions that I should sit still, and so I tried to forget about my private troubles by concentrating on my best patent-leather shoes from Thayer, McNeil and Hodgkins. They stuck straight out in front of me, for in this particular chair it was useless to try to make them touch the floor; but I did not mind, since they were as handsome a sight as one could wish, and, like my Venetian glass beads, I saw them rarely.

The pupils played solos and duets; Mrs. Moorehouse herself obliged with a long number and her daughter Marian gave us a piece on the cello — which was big of Mrs. Moorehouse, for she did not give cello lessons. At last came my turn; the piano stool was raised with a distressing shriek and I was hoisted on to it to grapple publicly with the intricacies of the 'Doll's Dream' (*Püppchens Träumen und Erwachen*). It was composed to show three phases of the dolly: 'The doll sleeps' (*Püppchen schläft ein*), 'The doll wakes' (*Püppchen erwacht*), 'The doll dances' (*Püppchen tanzt*). Mrs. Moorehouse sat beside me to turn the pages and give me stamina, and I ploughed right through the whole three phases with no noticeable break.

When I had finished and the guests had applauded, my mother stood up, looking very flushed and quite unnaturally bright. She said breathlessly, 'Excuse me, Mrs. Moorehouse, this is the proudest day of my life.' Then she sat down again, and her face shone through a mist of perspiration. When my father came home that night she told him about it, and although he tried to pass it off lightly we could see that even he was shaken. 'Snuggly,' he said, calling me by a name he had made up for me when I was a baby, which had long ago been discarded. 'Why, Snuggly! Did you really play the piano in front of everybody?'

'I tell you, Clinton,' said my mother, 'I don't know of one other child in the

whole of Wollaston who could have sat up there as big as life and played the way she did, and don't think I'm prejudiced. Did I tell you what Mrs. Moorehouse said? She says Ruth has a *natural* touch! I tell you, Clinton, I'd like to have died.'

Before long I was equal to 'The Merry Miller' and my father's favorite, 'The Pixies' Drill.' When I was asked to play for company he would say, 'Give us "The Pixies' Drill," Ruth,' and then he would reassure the guests, 'Listen now, this one's all right; it's got a lot of go.' He used to call for it even when I got to be fourteen or fifteen, until I finally pretended I had forgotten it because I thought it seemed too childish a piece. My father was really distressed. 'I don't see how you ever let that get away from you,' he said regretfully. 'Next to "Sailin'" that was your best piece of all. When you get somethin' good like that was, make it a rule to hang on to it.'

My mother loved best the pieces which called for my hands to be crossed over back and forth. This struck her as very difficult, and she would draw her chair close to the piano to get the best possible view. After I had finished she would remind us again of that first concert when Mrs. Moorehouse had said that I had a natural touch.

When I was about twelve, Mrs. Moorehouse went through a long period of illness and it would be many months before she could take pupils again. We changed over to Miss Jeannie Hatch, with whom we were allowed to make the same arrangement for paying, except that Miss Hatch preferred to have the sewing done at our house instead of having my mother come to her. This was very annoying to me, for it meant that each week I had to carry home a big suit box of Miss Jeannie Hatch's, and after my mother had finished sewing its

contents I had to carry it back up the hill to Miss Hatch's. One day a girl at school said, 'You know what I heard about you? Your mother sews for Miss Hatch to pay for your music lessons.'

'She does not,' I said, laughing superciliously at the mere thought.

'Well, then,' said my friend, 'what's that big box you carry up to Miss Hatch's every week?'

'I don't have to tell you if I don't want to,' was my trapped repartee.

I wanted to give up taking music lessons at once, but my mother said, 'Just because she's small doesn't mean you have to be, and you got no call to feel bad, only I just hope to gracious your father doesn't hear about it, because he'd be jumping mad.'

'But, Mama,' I argued, 'even you must be ashamed about sewing for my lessons, because you never told Papa.'

'Don't be so silly,' she said tartly. 'Do you think I want him to feel he can't do for you? I guess there's more'n one kind of pride.'

'But how *does* he think they get paid for?'

'Oh, well, what he doesn't know won't hurt him. He thinks they just cost a quarter.'

'But, Mama,' I persisted, 'if Papa wouldn't want you to take in sewing I don't think it's *right* for you to make me take lessons.'

'You just worry about your own worries and don't trouble about what doesn't concern you; later on when you got more sense you'll be glad and thankful I made you keep up your music. Some day it'll give you a lot of happiness.'

As my mother heard me take all day to learn 'Kiss Me Good Night' and 'Get Out and Get Under' I wonder if she thought that all the yards of sewing she had done for Mrs. Moorehouse and Miss Jeannie Hatch had been well invested.

(To be continued)

BEHIND THE BUDGET

BY STUART CHASE

I

THE budget of the Federal Government is a plan for future receipts and expenditures.

The President estimates, for instance, that tax collections will amount to 1000, to use a simple number; that running the army, the navy, the state department, relief, and the rest will amount to 1100, leaving a deficit of 100. Or he estimates that expenditures will amount to 950, with an indicated surplus of 50.

Various departments of the government then go ahead and collect taxes and spend them. The final result at the end of the year may or may not agree with the budget estimates. If a cash surplus should turn up, some of it could be used to reduce the government's indebtedness. If a cash deficit develops, then, unless it has other funds available, the Treasury must go out and borrow the difference.

No distinction is made in either the budget or the Treasury bookkeeping between expenditures for running expenses and expenditures for permanent structures like dams, post offices, hospitals. The government never follows business procedure in capitalizing its assets; it dumps them all into the year's running expenses.

During the war, Treasury deficits were, of course, prodigious, and the national debt ran up like Fujiyama. During the 1920's, surpluses appeared, and some of the Liberty bonds were bought in and retired. Since the de-

pression, the debt has again been rapidly climbing.

A large part of this debt is owed by the government to the banks for deposits created by them against government bonds put in their vaults. The rest represents savings of individuals borrowed by the government, either directly, as in baby bonds, or through the medium of life-insurance companies or other institutional reservoirs for savings. A substantial part of the debt is offset by debts owed to the government. Thus the Treasury borrows money and advances it to the RFC. The RFC lends it to the Pennsylvania Railroad. Another considerable part is offset by permanent plant and structures. Neither offset appears in the present budgetary procedure.

The next presidential campaign will probably be fought on the issue of 'economy.' The proponents of thrift will line up against the spenders. The air will be blue with passion and oratory, most of it irrelevant to the facts and the real issues involved. The real issues transcend party lines, the New Deal, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Hoover. Before the air gets bluer or blood pressures mount higher, suppose we try to assemble the facts and see what some of the real issues are. If our reasoning is valid, these issues will have to be reckoned with by future administrations of any political persuasion — Republican, Conservative Democrat, New Deal, or Progressive.

Preliminary to the analyses, I have a

few prejudices to confess. First, I am fundamentally a pay-as-you-go man. I don't like debts; I never have liked them. I shy away from them personally. I don't buy a motorcar until I have the cash in hand. I don't often lend money to my friends because of the strain on the friendship. In books and articles I have frequently complained about the 'debt burden.'

Second, as an accountant I have been skeptical for many years about the federal budget and Treasury bookkeeping as officially presented. It doesn't mean anything significant to me. As a taxpayer I feel that I am entitled to a much clearer account of what has happened to my money. Here, briefly, is the story of my disillusionment.

Shortly after I left college, my father, Harvey S. Chase, took me to Washington to help him set up a new federal budget procedure. President Taft had appointed him a member of the Commission of Economy and Efficiency, to do this. My father said that the old budget made little sense. It dealt only in cash receipts and cash disbursements. It did not allow for capital items. No business kept its books in such primitive fashion. Not even an expert could tell where Uncle Sam was at.

So, with Republican encouragement, my father tried to formulate a capital budget. Presently he hit a stone wall, in the opposition of a corps of Treasury officeholders. A budget that was good enough for Alexander Hamilton was good enough for them. My father was a tough fighter in those days — but they were tougher. The capital budget, despite President Taft's interest, was not introduced then and never has been. Sweden has one, but not the United States.

This was a vivid experience for a cub accountant. Twenty-eight years ago, by working on the Treasury books, I lost my faith in the federal budget. Ever since I have regarded it with suspicion, and have looked elsewhere for more useful information about national finances.

The Government borrows money and buys or builds houses, forest land,¹ post offices, highways, dams, office buildings, and so forth. There they are, good solid evidences of community wealth. Their depreciation or amortization should be charged to the budget over the life of the asset. The whole outlay should not be charged in the year it is bought or built. I refuse to be frightened by a catalogue of debts which seems to me to reflect not facts but bad bookkeeping.

My third prejudice is more recent. In 1932 I was converted, by reading John Maynard Keynes, to his thesis about compensatory spending. Since then I have found ample corroboration, both practical and theoretical. Mr. Keynes has recently refined his presentation, in a book called *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, and to-day many leading economists agree with him too. The theory centres around the devastating effects of idle capital. Someone must invest this capital when unemployment is severe, or the whole economy is in danger of collapsing. If private citizens won't or can't spend or invest, the government must.

This seems to be virtually a law of survival for interdependent, power-age communities. The New Deal has followed this thesis only in a left-handed, half-hearted manner. The Tory government in England has done better.

II

The system which we loosely call capitalism is largely built on debt.

In any given period of production, enough money is released in the form of

¹Sometimes even Republicans advocate this. The New York *Herald Tribune*, for instance, said editorially on April 8, 1939, in respect to a bill in Congress to appropriate \$10,000,000 for a national forest in Michigan: 'We believe that the nation will approve an opportunity to make a public investment that will be noncompetitive with private industry and that will provide an economic future for 127,000 inhabitants.'

wages, salaries, interest, dividends, profits, to buy back the goods and services produced. This axiom is accepted by nearly every student who has analyzed the circuit of money. If the only goods produced were food and clothing — consumers' goods — and we all spent our incomes as fast as received, the financial system could never break down. The result would be a pure pay-as-you-go economy. But standards of living would not rise.

We have never had such a system. Our plan has been to save part of our income, and buy with it not consumers' goods but capital goods — machines, factories, plant. This buying is called investment. We make an investment by lending our savings to a promoter or entrepreneur, and he buys the capital goods. He also contracts a debt. *Our investment is his debt.* By virtue of the new plant, greater output becomes possible, progress is possible, standards of living can rise. Out of this increasing production it has been assumed that a return on the investment was both feasible and equitable.¹

This investment-debt procedure is the heart of capitalism. By forgoing present consumption, consumption per capita can be increased in the future. For many years the system worked. People saved and invested, the capital goods were bought, standards of living rose. *But the system can work smoothly only if savings are promptly invested.* If savings are in effect hoarded, it means that some of the goods already produced cannot be sold, except at a loss. It means that the idle money is presently reflected in idle machines and idle men. Capitalism has always been potentially vulnerable. Its Achilles heel was a condition, or a time, when opportunities for investment should decline in relation to savings.

¹ When savings are invested in one's own business, of course no debt results. When they are invested in stocks a kind of liability results from corporation to stockholder, but not a legal debt.

For many years in this country we have been saving close to 20 per cent of our national income. For at least two decades we have been finding it increasingly difficult to invest that amount in private productive enterprise. Only about half of our national expenditures for non-consumers' goods, during the past eighteen years, has gone into industrial plant, according to the figures presented by Dr. Lauchlin Currie before the Temporary National Economic Committee. Of this plant investment less and less comes from savings of individuals. To-day large corporations accumulate their own savings and do not need to borrow ours. Since 1933, more than 90 per cent of all expenditures for plant and equipment has come from corporate surpluses and depreciation reserves. Less than 10 per cent has been borrowed in the regular capital markets.² Meanwhile our banks are stuffed with unspent balances. Reserves are at an all-time high.

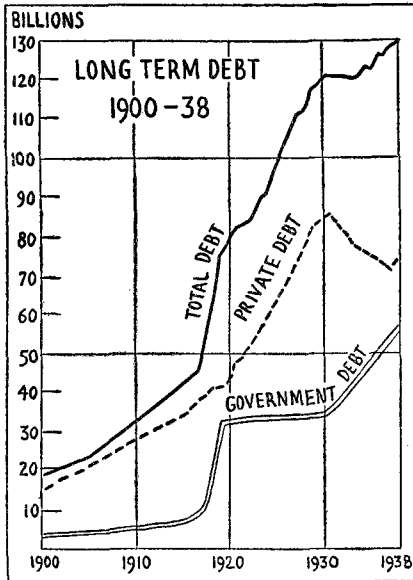
If the present ratio of savings to national income is going to be maintained, there are two major channels for savings, other than industrial plant: residential and non-profit construction, and public construction. For the eighteen years from 1921 to 1938, gross expenditures for things other than consumers' goods were divided: plant and equipment, 55 per cent; housing, 23 per cent; government outlays, 13 per cent; all other expenses, 9 per cent. For three years of recovery, 1935 to 1937, the division was: plant and equipment, 44 per cent; housing, 9 per cent; government, 20 per cent; all other expenses, 27 per cent. Most of the last item was an abnormal increase in expenditures for building up inventories.

For generations we have encouraged our children to be thrifty and save their pennies. 'Thrift' and 'saving' are words which have come to be tenderly regarded in the folkways. 'Hoarding' and 'debt' are bad words. But sometimes savings in

² From the testimony of Dr. Oscar L. Altman before the TNEC.

effect are hoarded because investments cannot be found. And a good share of our investments are in the form of the other fellow's debts. Our money itself is

CHART 1



built on debt. Most of it is bank credit or check money. The other side of the deposit is the debt of a borrower from the bank. Paper money can be regarded as a form of public debt, without interest. Automobiles, refrigerators, radios, electric stoves, trucks, harvesters, are often bought on the installment plan. This is a debt plan, and the average interest rate is around 15 per cent.

Thrift, savings, investment, debt, are thus closely related. One sequence might run: Because of being taught the idea of *thrift*, Adam Adams *saved* \$1000; he *invested* the money in a Baltimore & Ohio bond, and thus holds part of the *debt* of that great — though insolvent — railroad. The thrifter some of us are, the more debts are likely to be contracted. Periods of prosperity are always accompanied by rapid increases in the total debt of the community; depressions are accompanied by a slowing down of debt accumulation. In boom times, new plant is being constructed — facto-

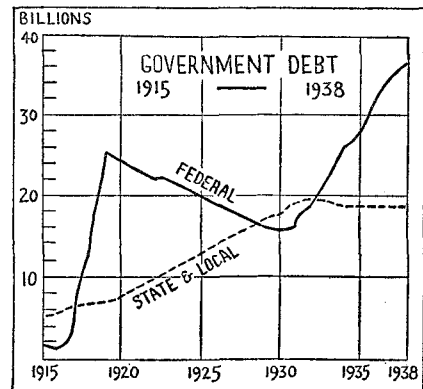
ries, skyscrapers, subdivisions, highways, ships. Of course the total community debt goes up like a jack-in-the-box. That is the way the system has been working for a long time, both here and abroad.

Chart 1 illustrates the point. It shows long-term debts in the United States since 1900. The bottom line is government debt, both federal and local;¹ the middle line is private debt;² the top line is the sum of government and private debt.

We have had two mighty booms in this period — the war boom and the New Era. Observe how the first was accompanied by an uprush in government debt (mostly Liberty Loans), and the second by an uprush in private debt. Observe how the total debt has tended to flatten out since the great depression. Observe especially how, *at the precise moment when private debt began to fall, public debt began to rise.*

Chart 2 shows the course of federal debt compared with state and local government obligations since 1915.³ See how the decline in federal debt during the 1920's was offset by the increase in

CHART 2



¹ Figures from reports of the Secretary of the Treasury and from the Department of Commerce.

² From estimates of the National Industrial Conference Board, the Department of Commerce, and the AAA. No short-term debt is included.

³ Federal debt figures from reports of the Secretary of the Treasury. State and local figures from the Department of Commerce. Both long- and short-term obligations are included.

local debt. States and cities were 'unbalancing' their budgets to the tune of about a billion a year — mostly for school buildings, roads, and utilities.

As the depression deepened, local government credit began to melt away. Private credit, as Chart 1 indicates, melted even faster. That left the Federal Government as the sole agent capable of underwriting the debt structure and saving the American economic system from collapse.

The chief underwriting instrument to begin with was Mr. Hoover's Reconstruction Finance Corporation. This agency placed two billions of government credit under tottering banks, insurance companies, and railroads. A large fraction of the increase in public debt has been due to the government's bolstering up of private debt. A glance at the portfolio of the RFC will show you how the two are intermingled. If private debt is moral and government debt is immoral, then immoral debt has been extremely helpful in underwriting good, moral, private debt.

How does it happen that while nearly every individual debt, public or private, must be paid off according to contract, the total of long-term debts outstanding has been growing for a long time? Because, as old debts are paid, new and larger ones are contracted. Often a specific old debt is 'refunded' at maturity. It is paid, not by cash, but by a new debt. Old bonds are exchanged for new.

How our economy would operate with a declining net debt has never been tried except once — between 1929 and 1933. It was not a very encouraging trial. The national income fell from eighty billion dollars to forty.

It seems quite obvious that if all debts were suddenly paid off the present economic machine would be wrecked, promptly and permanently. Creditors would have more cash than they could possibly spend for consumers' goods, while avenues for reinvestment and the

creation of new debt would be closed, by definition. Thrift, savings, and most investment would disappear. Debtors would be penniless following the herculean task of raising the funds to pay their creditors. We should have to go back to barter, or set up a brand-new money system. The system we are used to would be expiring in the throes of a kind of financial lockjaw.

Any given debt can be paid without injury to the system, but only on the proviso that another debt, as great or greater, appears somewhere else in the economy at substantially the same time. At least that is the way things have been in the past.

That is why I do not grow haggard worrying about the burdens my grandchildren will have to bear. The principal of the public debt cannot be paid off without wiping out a vast field of investment, thereby ruining the economic system. What would the banks and insurance companies have to invest in? The principal can, of course, be reduced in prosperous times when private debt is expanding — as during the 1920's. It is a gross misconception to compare the public debt or the corporate debt to your personal debts in all particulars. *You* would like to be free of debt. But *you* would also like to have some life insurance and some investments. There cannot be a system to be called capitalism without a huge and growing debt structure. At least there never has been. Perhaps you prefer corporate debt to government debt. But do you put your own savings there? It is curious how the people who damn the government the merriest have most of their money in tax-exempt securities. It is a little like spreading the news around: 'You know that old Fourth National will blow up any day now. That's where I keep all my money.'

Whether we like it or not, our Federal Government has become the balance wheel of the American economy. Dr. Alvin Hansen of Harvard says: 'Govern-

ments all over the world are in process of becoming intermediaries between ultimate savers and investment outlets; but the process of production is still carried on by private enterprise.'

More important than the principal of a debt is the carrying charge. What does it cost a year in interest and amortization? In England they do not speak of a man as being worth a million pounds, but rather as being worth £30,000 a year. For many financial matters the annual rate is a better measure than the gross total. In a debt structure which goes on indefinitely, a principal of \$30,000 at 1 per cent per annum is no more burdensome than a principal of \$5000 at 6 per cent. Each costs the debtor \$300 a year.

Here is a table taken from the *New York Times*, March 26, 1939, showing average yields; a yield is a closer estimate of annual cost than an interest rate.

<i>Average yields</i>	1939	1929	1919
U. S. Government bonds	2.43%	3.60%	4.62%
High-grade municipal bonds.....	2.70	4.27	4.46
High-grade corporate bonds.....	3.00	4.73	5.48
All corporate bonds.....	3.81	5.21	6.26

If this keeps on, the interest rate or important sections of it will hit zero in the lifetime of many of us. It has marched almost halfway to zero in twenty years. Note that the decline from 1919 to 1929 was in a boom period, and the somewhat greater decline from 1929 to 1939 was in a depression period. The interest rate is one indication that capital is getting too abundant, that opportunities for investment are drying up. The *Times* story from which these yields were quoted declared that in March 1939 there were eight billion dollars of United States Government obligations quoted on the market, at a price yielding the investor nothing. The interest rate had in effect reached zero for those issues.

On June 30, 1921, the principal of the federal debt stood at 23.7 billion dollars. The annual interest burden was then 1030 millions. On June 30, 1938, the

principal had grown to 36.6 billions. But the annual interest burden was 947 millions — *actually less than in 1921*. The total interest charge for long-term public and private debt combined is much less to-day than it was in 1929. Chart 1 and the yield table above explain why this must be so. The combined principal is a little greater, but the interest rate has fallen sharply. The chief business of investment bankers in recent years has been refunding old debts with new issues at lower rates of interest.

Despite the cries and alarms, the credit of the United States Government to-day is a wonder to behold. Some Treasury bond issues have been oversubscribed as much as twenty times. In 1932, when the federal debt was about half what it is now, 3 per cent government bonds sold down as low as 83. To-day 2½ per cents are selling at 102. Money from all over the world is flowing into the United States, as the safest haven on earth. It used to be said that capital, if it did not like the state of affairs, would flee the country. To what other country, pray, will it flee?

I don't like debts; but, in the light of the above facts, I cannot work myself into a panic about the public debt. What keeps me awake nights is unemployment. I hope to live to see the day when long-term debt is not central in the American economy. But that day will not be to-morrow. It will come slowly by a series of readjustments in our financial habits.

III

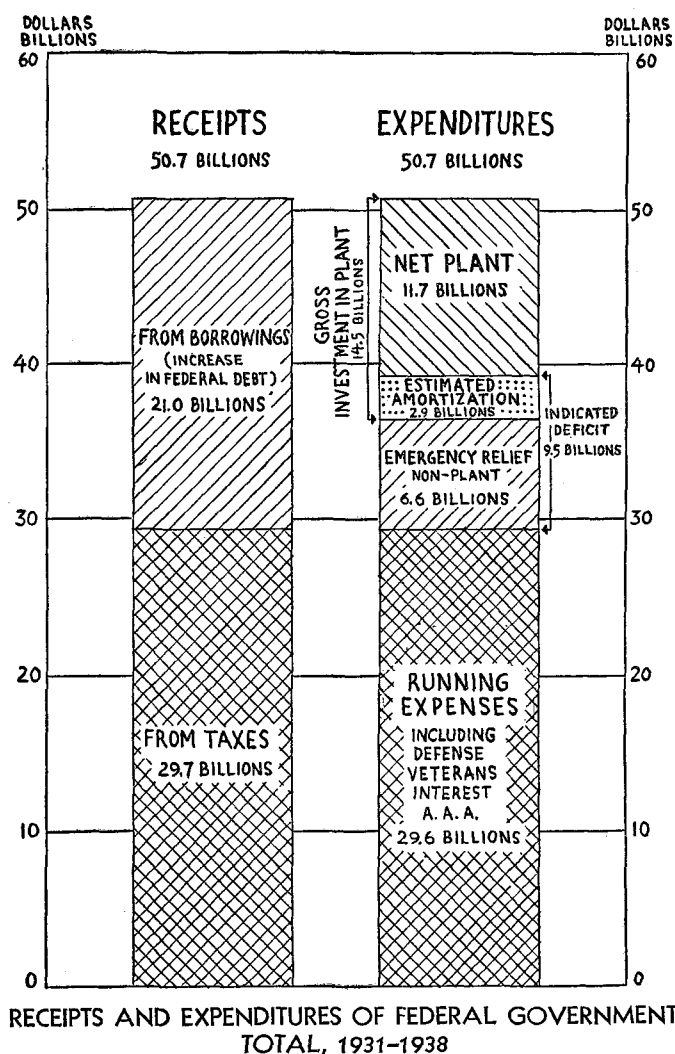
Chart 3 answers one of the questions which I have been asking since meeting the Treasury officials under President Taft. How much of the government's expenditures in recent years have been for running expenses, and how much for capital goods? The chart gives a rough idea of what a capital budget would look like. The figures are the result of an analysis made by *Fortune* and checked by technicians of the National Resources

Committee. The chart was introduced in the TNEC hearings and covers the period from 1931 through 1938.

It tells its own story. I do not need to explain it. Taxes during the eight years just about covered running expenses. Included in the latter are battleship construction and the AAA, items which a more careful capital budget might put in another category. Twenty-one billion dollars was borrowed. It is customary in conservative circles to write this all off as good money poured down the sewer.

Having seen Boulder Dam and Grand Coulee, two of the mightiest and most enduring structures ever built by man, I am unable to agree with this. It would be hard to get a block of concrete four times the size of the Great Pyramid down any sewer. Out of this 21 billions, about 14.5 billions was spent for permanent structures, some of them self-liquidating, some not. An ample depreciation allowance for the eight years has been figured at almost three billion dollars — about 20 per cent of the principal.

CHART 3
FIGHTING THE DEPRESSION



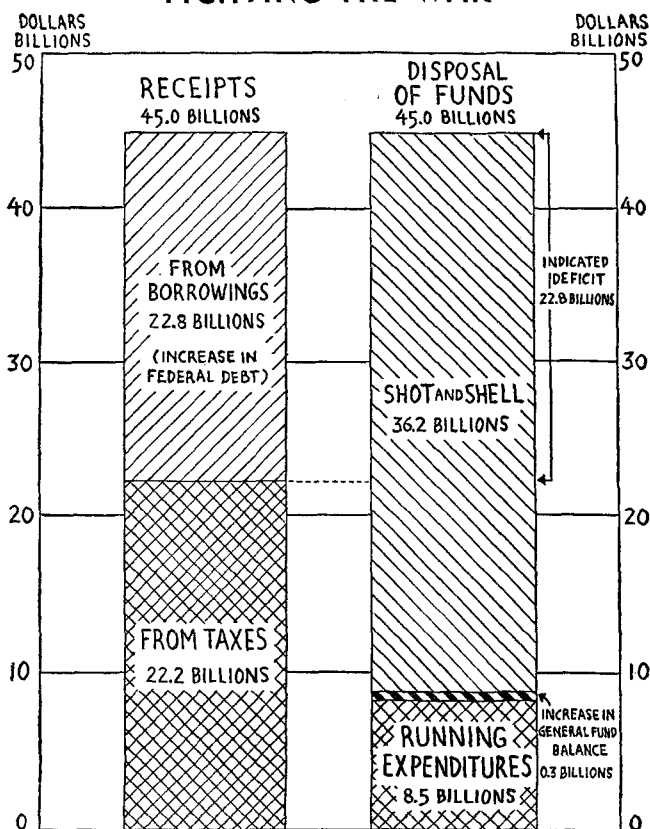
That leaves 11.5 billion dollars for the net value of plant constructed. The rest, 9.5 billions, is the measure of the deficit in the war against the depression. At least, it is my measure. You may want to make it more or less. But if you hold that the whole 21 billions is deficit, you are violating all the principles of sound accounting. If you jump to the other side and hold, as some do, that the 21 billion dollars is all an asset, because without it the economic system would have been sunk, you are reciting perhaps a poetic truth but hardly an accounting one. Somewhere between the two extremes the truth, as usual, lies. This chart is close enough for my purposes. We have been going in the hole, in the

sense of getting no goods directly for our money, at the rate of a billion and a quarter a year.

During the war against Germany, the rate was about 6 billion dollars in the hole a year. Chart 4¹ tells this story. In the four years shown, the Federal Government more than covered its running expenses from taxes, borrowed 23 billion dollars more, and spent the whole sum, a cool 36 billions, for war purposes — ‘shot and shell.’ There were a few stray assets after it was all over, — some ships to tie up in a cove on the Hudson River, some emergency camp buildings, — but most of it was worn out, rusted out,

¹ Prepared from annual reports of the Secretary of the Treasury.

CHART 4
FIGHTING THE WAR



RECEIPT AND DISPOSAL OF FEDERAL FUNDS
TOTAL, FISCAL YEARS 1917-1921

eaten up, or shot away. But the deficit spending was so lavish that we enjoyed one of the greatest periods of prosperity in our history. Everybody had a job; prices were roaring; employers were begging for more men.

These two charts will repay some meditation. They are cast in terms of dollars and cents, but their psychological implications are profound. When we really want to lick somebody like the Kaiser, we make the financial system lie down and roll over. Nobody worries about balancing the budget, or grandchildren staggering under burdens too great to bear. But when we set out to lick a depression, our hearts are obviously not in the work. The queer thing is that it could probably be licked as easily as the Kaiser, and without killing anybody.

Chart 5 is taken from an article by Geoffrey Crowther, editor of the London *Economist*, published in the *New York*

employment is divided: about an eighth went into the army, three eighths into munitions and public works, and the rest into the *production of more consumers' goods*. To-day there is a serious labor shortage in Germany. Prosperity of a sort has been achieved. But it is a 'shot and shell' prosperity, reared on spending for implements of death.

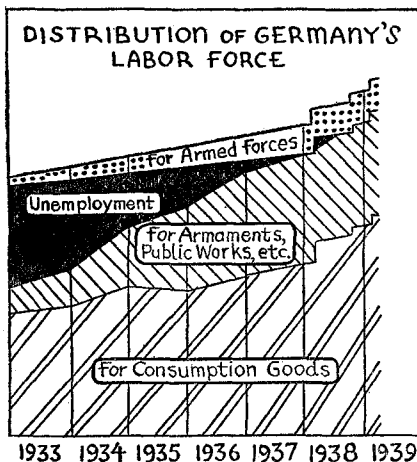
What will happen to a country which some day is bold enough to abolish unemployment by spending for instruments of life — for houses, schools, medical care, for conservation, parks, playgrounds, for the arts?

IV

When somebody wants to discredit the government, he talks about 'bottomless extravagance,' 'an orgy of spending.' He says: 'You can't drink yourself sober.' Nobody does this more vigorously than General Hugh S. Johnson. Many persons applaud such sentiments and vow to vote the spenders out of office. Suppose that they do. The incoming party must then assume the responsibility for rescuing the economic system — or at least for keeping its nose above water. This is no light responsibility, as we have seen. The incoming party must now do a great deal of spending, while the deposed party takes its turn at denouncing 'reckless extravagance' and 'shameless raids on the Treasury.'

Here are a few gigantic facts which we must not forget for a moment, any more than an electrician dares to forget the proximity of a high-tension line: *About one third of our working population to-day, aided by machines and power, can produce all the necessities required by the whole community.* Farmers constituted 90 per cent of the population in 1790; now they constitute about 20 per cent, and half of them are not needed as commercial producers of food and fibre. As the number of workers required to produce necessities shrinks, the rest of the population must either think up something else to do or just settle down as con-

CHART 5



Times, May 21, 1939. It shows, in terms of man power, how the Nazis banished unemployment in Germany after 1933. They used a method similar to ours in the war — Chart 4. They taxed, borrowed, and spent until all unemployed persons — some six million to start with — were sucked into the economic machine, and nearly as many more were added. Observe how the increased em-

sumers. Both things have happened. We have a great and growing army producing what once were luxuries — automobiles, electric refrigerators, oil-burning furnaces, radios. We have a growing army in the service trades, the amusement trades, and the professions. We have a huge expansion of government services. We have also eight to twelve million unemployed. Most of this new work my great-grandfather would have classed as fripperies and folderols. He would have voted against it. People talk as though it could be voted down to-day; as though we could cut off the support of two thirds of the population and not obliterate the market for the rest.

It is too late to get rid of our high-voltage machinery, too late to argue for handicraft policies in a world of mass production. To-day, in 1939, this country has been bound into one vast exchange network, in which almost nobody produces any salable article by his own labor, in which it takes many thousands of workers to provide an average meal, in which no family is self-sufficient. The most drastic remedy you could think of — say chloroforming the unemployed — would not save us from the problems of unemployment. Indeed, this would produce a major business panic, because of the five or six billion dollars' worth of goods which the unemployed now consume in a year. For even the idle perform an important economic function. As long as they stay alive they must somehow consume, and so they help to keep sales of goods up and surpluses down.

Look at it this way. We exist by exchanging products and services with one another. The exchanges are consummated with a device called money. No money, no exchanges, no production. The transfer of goods for money, and of money for goods, at a rate to keep the community supplied and employed, is the most important economic function there is. *Another name for the transfer is spending.*

The act of spending was not among

the virtues taught us in our childhood. It is considered far from a virtue by critics of the government to-day. The word is pronounced with a sneer and a roll of the eyes. How much of this is due to politics and how much to a misunderstanding of economic facts, I do not know.

A large volume of unemployment is *ipso facto* evidence that the exchange of goods is too sluggish. There is only one cure for it, and that is to speed up the rate of exchange, or spending. If entrepreneurs will borrow money, build new factories, and employ men to produce more capital goods, that will check the drift toward depression. If a group of benevolent millionaires should hire an army to bail out Long Island Sound, that would also halt the depression. If the government should borrow money and pay it to men for goose-stepping in circles, or for equipping the Missouri River with a fleet of battleships, or for erecting a copy of the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in Central Park, or for constructing a fine new hospital — any of these projects would check the depression. The New England hurricane, in September 1938, promptly raised the sales of retailers in that section. (*Per contra*, when Henry Ford closed his plants to change over to Model A, he brought on a minor depression.)

The above projects have one thing in common. They all put idle money to work. Idle men receive the idle money and go to the grocery store on Saturday night and spend it. Their families are hungry. The money will be spent quickly. The whole exchange network will be speeded up. A grateful quiver will run from retailer to wholesaler, to jobber, to farmer, to railroad man, to trucker, to manufacturer. This new spending — this 'orgy,' if you please — is almost instantly converted into sales on the books of some grocer, merchant, coal dealer, gas station, landlord.

A recent study of PWA construction work since 1933 shows about a billion

dollars advanced to private contractors, and by them paid out as wages to workers on the several projects. These in turn were spent as follows:—

1. For food.....	\$350,000,000
2. For shelter — rent, coal, power, repairs, etc.....	191,000,000
3. For clothing.....	130,000,000
4. For transportation — automobiles, gasoline, tires, oil, railroad fares, buses, etc.....	109,000,000
5. For recreation — movies, radio, sports, etc.....	65,000,000
6. For furnishings — beds, rugs, refrigerators, etc.....	53,000,000
7. For health — doctors, dentists, hospitals.....	50,000,000

It would be hard to classify this budget as waste and extravagance. This is business as usual, *and it is the other side of government spending.*

Perhaps the PWA projects were ill-advised. That is another question. Was the 350 million dollars spent for food ill-advised? Where would American farmers have been without this help to move their crops? Certainly these PWA projects were better than Mr. Hitler's lethal projects shown on Chart 5.

Shall we therefore conclude that any spending for any project, or for no project at all, is good for the modern economic machine? If unemployment is high and the rate of goods exchange low, we should draw just this conclusion. When there are no unemployed, or very few, we should draw a very different conclusion. At full employment, if the government or anybody else steps in to divert man power to useless projects, extravagance and nothing else result. Anti-spenders see no difference between full employment and partial. Yet this distinction is cardinal for an understanding of how a high-energy economy works. At partial employment, an earthquake, a hurricane, or a flood is an economic godsend.

Anti-spenders have the authority of classical economists behind them. No classicist that I have read would admit the possibility of *involuntary* idleness,

long continued. Some of the classical formulas which hold for full employment are meaningless under modern conditions. In 1860, in the middle of a period of the most rapid expansion the world has ever known, it was natural for the great classicists to ignore the possibility of involuntary idleness. For their followers to ignore it to-day is uncritical, if not disastrous. What the people of other nations are rapidly learning, and what we must learn, is that a waste of money is not so great an evil as a waste of man power. Money may be apparently 'wasted' in a program to make more jobs, but the community gains. More jobs mean more production and more goods. Money may be apparently 'saved' in an economy program, but the community loses — as jobs, exchanges, production, fall away.

Our economy has shifted from an era where money (gold and silver) meant wealth in itself, to an era where its prime function is to move goods. We suffer grievously because our mental habits make it difficult for us to appreciate this change in function.

Do you remember the grave warnings about inflation two or three years ago and how we shivered and shook with Major Angas? It has not come yet, and it will not come so long as there is a large reserve of unemployed man power. When full employment is reached, then is the time to worry about a price inflation. That is one of Germany's worries right now. But most prices cannot rise out of bounds while there are millions of men eager to go to work, and thousands of idle machines ready to turn.

I hope it is clear by this time that spending is essential to keep the modern world going. The real divergence comes in the matter of *who is to initiate the spending.* Many people feel that if private business initiates it, the result is safe and orthodox. They do not call it spending, however, but 'prudent in-

vestment.' If the government does the initiating, on the other hand, it is considered perverse, and the 'spending-extravagance' theme is played until it becomes a stereotype.

If we could all agree that some form of spending or investment must be initiated and maintained when the economy is on part time, that would be one point gained. For my part, I should be quite satisfied if private enterprise would take the lead. But what if it can't? What if private industry is unable to carry the full burden? It has not, as a matter of fact, done so since before the war. Look at Chart 1 again.

There is a stock answer for this — the lack of 'confidence.' People say that if the government would stop spending and balance the budget, then business men would joyfully borrow idle savings and begin constructing new plants. This I think is putting the cart before the horse. Business men are not in the habit of expanding their productive facilities when orders are falling off. The first effect of balancing the budget would be a sharp decrease in orders. Millions of men and women would no longer have pay checks to spend in grocery stores on Saturday nights. A business man who knows his business does not usually expand his plant until the machines he has are running at somewhat near capacity.

England was pulled out of the depression primarily by a great government housing program. This so stimulated business that after a while private capital took over the bulk of residential construction. You cannot expect private individuals to initiate a huge spending program just because they have a song in their hearts. But they will come in after an organized group really starts something. That is what happened here after 1933. The government took the lead and private business followed. In 1937 as much was being spent for plant and equipment as in the middle 1920's.

'Confidence' is a kind of heaven, a point in theological space. If you ask a

hundred business men what they propose to build when they recapture their confidence, where they propose to build it, and how much they will put into it, you will find that ninety of them have no blueprints. I do not doubt that some New Deal legislation has depressed many people, any more than I doubt that some has saved many banks from closing their doors.

There was plenty of confidence in 1929, but in that year investment declined in relation to savings, and the Brookings Institution found a general condition of excess capacity throughout American industry. Investment opportunities have been and are increasingly depressed by:

1. The decline in the growth rate of population.¹
2. The end of the frontier.
3. The stalemate in foreign loans.
4. The growing efficiency of new machines, requiring fewer dollars of capital per unit of output.
5. The absence of any great new industry to stimulate investment, as the motorcar industry stimulated it in the 1920's.

In the face of these long-term trends, I for one am uneasy about encouraging spending by stopping it. I think that business men are indulging in too much wishful thinking in this connection. Most of them do not want any more capacity in their own industry, but they hope that there is a wonderful field for it in some other industry.

I do not see how a government policy in the direction of a reduced transfer of money could fail to make matters worse. A conservative President, however, say Mr. Dewey or Mr. Garner, might try it in 1941 and see what happens. It would be an interesting clinical test of the economic value of confidence. I suggest, however, if I may be so bold, a fine, deep cyclone cellar for the President to pop into after about three months. The last time we balanced the federal budget was in 1937. From June 30, 1937

¹ Discussed in my article in the *Atlantic* for February 1939.

to March 30, 1938, the Treasury books showed a cash surplus of about one hundred million dollars. This was accompanied by the swiftest downrush in our industrial history.

V

Our national income in 1929 was some eighty-two billion dollars. It should be one hundred billions to-day. We are a one-hundred-billion-dollar country. We are tooled up for that. We can produce that. We have been educated to consume that. So long as we fall short of it, crops will rot in the fields, machines rot in the mills, men rot in the streets, funds rot in the banks.

Unemployment is the real index of national well-being. Policies which reduce it are economically beneficial, and vice versa. A net increase in spending automatically increases employment. There are three chief ways to do this:—

1. Borrow idle savings and hire idle men.
2. Create new bank money and hire idle men.
3. Tax away idle savings through income and inheritance taxes, and hire idle men.

The first two increase debts, the third does not. Taxes on sales are normally of no help in reducing unemployment. They only transfer purchasing power from a taxpayer to a government employee or pensioner. (The Townsend Plan turnover tax is of this nature.)

We have here the beginning of a formula for operating a modern economy. Every nation is experimenting with it to-day. Government spending which increases net jobs is not robbing citizens, but on the contrary is helping every citizen. The cartoons depicting taxpayers groaning under a load of relief workers are erroneous. The relief workers, by purchasing food, clothing, shelter, and so stimulating the exchange of commodities, are helping to keep the taxpayers solvent. This can be convincingly and horribly proved by stopping relief and watching the unemployment index rise.

Either private industry or the government can borrow idle savings. The evidence accumulated over the last two decades, and shown in Chart 1, indicates clearly that private industry cannot take the responsibility alone for absorbing the unemployed. *What we need, then, is not pump priming, but a two-cylinder pump.* One cylinder is private investment; let it work for all it is worth. But beside it must stand another cylinder representing public investment. Its function is to undertake useful investments in which private business is not interested,—say low-cost housing,—to take up any slack, and to assume the lead in employing men in deep depression.

The theory that the function of government spending is to prime the one-lunger pump of private investment has not worked. I do not believe it will ever work. The time is overdue for a permanent new cylinder on the investment pump.

This brings us to the question which chiefly worries the Economy League, and which worries all of us to a degree. *How can we promote full employment without running up debts to the point of bankruptcy and repudiation?* Granted that the public credit is strong in 1939, how will it be in 1949, 1969? If private and public debts continue to grow as they did from 1900 to 1930, where will it all end? If public debt must now become a major investment outlet, how long can Uncle Sam hold out? Isn't it better to halt spending, even if unemployment does remain massive, to balance budgets, and keep debts down?

This sounds sensible when we say it as words, but is unworkable in a condition of underemployment. It is a solution which assumes that one can choose a point at which to stop. There is no such point in a dynamic economy. Unemployment feeds on itself, round and round downward. Remember 1929 to 1933. To let unemployment accelerate is a step toward economic suicide.

Suicide for the sake of unborn generations is not good enough for those of us who are trying to keep alive to-day.

That is why drives for economy make so little progress. In times like these, every dollar cut from a budget means a day's food for some family gone — if not on the first exchange, then on the second or third. You fire the taxeaters. The corner grocer soon feels the pressure of your zeal, and fires a clerk. Bums and saints, economizers and spenders, we are bound together in one network. It is the price the power age exacts for its vast potential productivity. Legislators are hard men, but seldom hard enough to sentence children and women to slow torture. That is what budget cuts usually mean. If the torture were only short-lived, the community could stand it. But the wound will not heal; it will only spread like a cancer.

VI

Spending cannot be stopped except at the cost of social disintegration. But the debts do not necessarily have to climb to the moon. There are at least two ways to hold them down: (1) reduce the ratio of savings to national income; (2) finance new investment by a minimum of long-term debt, at a minimum interest burden.

England has been making remarkable progress with the first. Before the war, she used to save for investment about 15 per cent of the national income. Now the ratio is less than 7 per cent. Excess savings have been reduced by a stiff income tax, and have been routed into housing subsidies, slum clearance, old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, medical care, and other social benefits.

Our saving ratio is nearly three times that of the English — around 20 per cent of national income. If we could get it down to 10 per cent, we should move that much nearer a pay-as-you-go economy. Instead of finding outlets for two billion dollars of private and public in-

vestment, out of every ten billions of national income, we should need to find outlets for only one billion. This would cut the idle-money problem in half. Another method would be to reduce the element of forced saving in life-insurance premiums. At present we buy insurance and we save — both in the same premium. If we bought only straight insurance, and relied more on old-age pensions, we could be as well protected. Pensions, financed by income taxes, cut down the ratio of savings, route idle money into circulation, satisfy a mammoth and growing political demand for security in old age.

Private investment can extricate itself from long-term debt to a degree, by shifting from a bond-and-mortgage basis to a stock-and-equity basis. It would not surprise me to see the railroad debt composed along these lines within the next few years. Stocks do not have to be paid off at a given date. Dividends do not have to be disbursed unless earned. A liability from corporation to stockholder remains, but it is not so burdensome and rigid as a bond or a mortgage.

How to make public investment — the other cylinder of the pump — operate at a reduced rate of debt accumulation is perhaps the outstanding challenge to modern statesmen. The New-Dealers have not yet produced an adequate long-term program.

Let me address a few unsolicited suggestions, then, to the next administration, whatever party it may represent. A canny opening move would be to go back to President Taft's idea and put the federal budget on a sensible accounting basis. Then, when you spend money for capital goods, citizens will not think that it is being spent for running expenses, or being recklessly squandered. The Swedes have a fine technique for operating a capital budget.

Second, I suggest that you really exploit the income tax, using the British example to siphon idle savings into active spending for old-age pension and other

social benefits. This will help to balance the budget and move the whole economy toward a pay-as-you-go basis. Go into the middle brackets. You will hit me there, but I know what is at stake. Your tax program should also include the elimination of tax-exempt securities.

Third, I suggest that you shift your public-works program as rapidly as possible from an emergency status to a permanent status. Move from the WPA kind of thing to the PWA kind of thing — firm, durable projects, well engineered, assisted by first-class mechanical devices, at rock-bottom costs. If the public-works cylinder is here to stay, it should be of the best possible quality.

A fourth step would be to decrease the interest rate so that carrying charges for public investment may be very low, and the debt burden held to a minimum. A concrete proposal can be found in the testimony of Mr. A. A. Berle, Jr. before the Monopoly Committee in Washington last May. He called for capital banks of a new type to finance long-term investments, both private and public. Interest rates would be selective, being very low for, say, hospital construction; low for large-scale housing projects; somewhat higher, but still reasonable, for small business men.

These banks could be government-owned, privately owned on a limited dividend basis, or jointly owned. They could take over most federal and local government financing for capital projects, removing such items from public budgets entirely. They could handle guarantees of private projects — as the Federal Housing Administration now does; loans to Latin America — as the Export-Import Bank now does. They could make direct loans for slum clearance, housing, railroad equipment, transmission lines, rural electrification, forest and conservation projects, bridges, highways, schools, health centres, water and sewage works, and so on.

Some such plan as this might greatly reduce unemployment, while restoring

and replenishing the resources of the country, at 2 per cent, 1 per cent, even less in some cases. It could put all idle savings to work. The return would be low, but safer than returns are to-day. There are no safe investments in a society where unemployment is great.

As private business and investment picked up, the government cylinder could decrease its activity. The difference between the two cylinders, furthermore, is often verbal rather than real. The motorcar industry has been dependent on both — private capital for automobile factories, public capital for the roads; each meaningless without the other.

Organizing these banks would call for the best financial knowledge and experience in the nation. Some very stiff problems would arise. I think that men of the necessary calibre can be found, willing to serve their country in a time of great need. They must be men big enough to see their profession in dynamic terms, not in the rigid formulas of a past generation.

But perhaps the new administration will not like my suggestions, or Mr. Berle's capital banks. Very good, gentlemen, what alternatives do you propose? The old handicraft-age formulas are useless; 'confidence' is a prayer, not a program. Some definite plan, and that shortly, our economy must have. We cannot go on indefinitely as the last great nation on earth bowed down with unemployment. Other nations have revamped their monetary devices, financed armaments, employed every able-bodied man and woman. We have an opportunity to finance better things than shot and shell. If we cannot agree on a plan — Democrats or Republicans or Progressives among us — a man on horseback may come riding in with one before so very long.

This I think is the real issue, which the stench and clamor of the next election will do so much to hide.

SIX KINGS

BY G. A. BORGESE

ON the eve of the visit of Britain's King and Queen to the United States, a writer to the *Times*, obviously concerned over the possible misbehavior of American individuals or groups, uttered this caution: —

(1) The King and Queen do not govern England.

(2) They are not responsible for the trouble in Palestine or anywhere else.

(3) They are to the British Empire what our flag is to us — a symbol.

This is a definition as adequate as frequent in the tradition of the most exemplary limited monarchy of our age. It sounds radically different from the definition of kingship as worded in Luke **xxii: 25**: 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them.'

The greatest of all crowned kings to-day is a symbol, a flag. The smallest — we shall take as an example the king of Italy — are souvenirs.

Yet there are kings to-day who 'exercise lordship.'

I

Italy, the country where legitimate and traditional kingship has shrunk to its tiniest and well-nigh invisible size, is also the country where the idea of kingship as lordship, of leadership as actual monarchy, experienced its earliest resurrection in the commotion of our age. It happened sometime between 1919 and 1926. For it would be a precision defeating itself to determine more rigorously at what moment of that septen-

nium Fascism grew fully aware of itself and shaped a theory and practice of absolute authority. This one fact is sure, that until the rise of Italian Fascism there had been two kinds of monarchies: a group of them, mainly Western, in which kingship had almost wholly evaporated into symbolical values, flag-like; and another group, especially represented by Russian Czarism and Turkish Sultanate, which the large majority of political and social observers contemplated as fossils of a defunct past. Wherever and whenever any other form of individual rule rose out of the vicissitudes of history, the consensus of the observers — not contradicted even by autocratic rulers such as Lenin or Atatürk — pointed to these new autocratic rules as to temporary expedients or practical devices, not at all as stumbling blocks across the progress of man towards Republican liberty.

The novelty of Fascism and its particular greatness consist in its having theoretically denied that this trend of man toward Democracy and Freedom is fated. For the first time, at least since the English revolutions of the seventeenth century, reaction stood up uncompromising and with a claim on perpetuity. Without any unctuous or apologetic demeanor, the One assumed the responsibility of the many, of all. His title, although no longer or not yet again the title of a king, was the *Duce*, a word of intense military meaning implying a much stricter and more active rulership than the word *Re, rex. Rex*, in

fact, is *is qui regit*, the ruling King with all the implications of the word pointing to a rule rather in the service of peace than in the emergency of war. But *Duce*, *dux*, is the captain of war, the conqueror; he is the unfettered master of men, above all law, a law unto himself and to those behind and beneath him, an absolute. Verbally and actually there is hardly a difference between the title of *Duce* and the title of *Imperator*, commander of armies, and therefore commander of peoples. The small Italian-Latin word *Duce* was transliterated a few years later into the German *Führer*, a leader whose leadership has the very same implications of the Cæsarian monarchy.

Magnitude or pettiness in Mussolini's character, genius or mere vulpine shrewdness in his doings, heroic predestination or the vulgar gambler's luck in his success, are not the relevant issues in the appraisal of the epochal reversal of which he was the early agency. Some day the personal elements of his experience and career will be engulfed in the universal and mostly unconscious meaning which they assumed at the start of this era. A sail, however ragged and dirty, may chance on a high wind which fills it with a speed fit for a discovery or a disaster, and the analysis of the yarns of which the sail was made testifies about an explorer's course or a pirate's shipwreck as much and as little as the critical knowledge of a revolutionist's biography about the import of his reform. Be Mussolini a titan or an inflated dwarf, a man of providence, as a Pope dubbed him, or a picked villain, a flag or a rag, — and readers know to which alternative we incline, — it was, however, a mighty and significant wind that made of this rag a racing sail. He it was who first became conscious of restoring to the field of reality the Machiavellian dream of the conquering Prince, he who first dared brazenly to think in terms of Empire and kingship absolute. Through him our contemporary world

first became aware of the possibility of revolutions not necessarily in a progressive and leftist direction, such as the Western world had been accustomed to for about three hundred years; it became aware of the feasibility of backward revolutions, burying the living and resurrecting the dead.

It was Italian Fascism that stripped of a juridical and sentimental camouflage the right of might, the unblushing authority of conquest, the boundless lordship of the One. Of all the ideas embodied by the English, the American, and the French revolutions it made laughingstocks. The League of Nations, summarizing the Western system in international law, was finally smashed by the Roman Duce in the early summer of 1936.

The wind filling that sail blew from the Roman past of antiquity and the Middle Ages. The real patterns of the Duce's behavior, unknown to most and probably obscure even in his own consciousness, are men like Crescentius in the tenth century, Arnold of Brescia in the twelfth, Cola di Rienzo in the fourteenth, and Stefano Porcari in the fifteenth century. Each and all of these lived, and more or less heroically died, in the delirious conviction that the world was out of joint because it did no longer acknowledge the primacy and divine right of the Roman people and of the world-ruler chosen by the Roman people. The Roman people, indeed, from the tenth to the fifteenth century, from Crescentius to Porcari, was a helpless rabble, 'sitting-up ruins.' This did not, however, stop the flight of the imagination; and the warning of reality against an absurd desire did not become effective until it was repeatedly twisted into the rope of the hangman or sharpened in the killer's steel.

No collective insanity is thoroughly void of rational justifications. What was and is right in all the Roman heirs, from Crescentius to the Duce, was and is the explicit or implicit protest against

the international lawlessness and anarchy which followed the crumbling of the Roman Empire. What was and is obviously wrong in them is the assumption that law and order among the nations can and must be restored in the shape of a resurrected Roman Empire, and that it is they who are the miracle-makers called to fling open that grave: Cola di Rienzo as a second Scipio, Benito Mussolini as a greater Augustus.

II

'In those days — I admit it openly — I conceived the most profound admiration for that great man south of the Alps who, full of ardent love for his people, would not deal with the internal enemies of Italy, but pushed their annihilation in every way and by all means. What will rank Mussolini among the great of this earth is the same determination not to share Italy with Marxism, but to save the fatherland from it by dooming internationalism to annihilation.

'How wretchedly dwarfish our German State yes-men appeared in contrast and how nauseating it is when these nonentities undertake, with boorish conceit, to criticize a man a thousand times as great; and how painful it is to think that all this goes in a country which, barely half a century ago, might still call a Bismarck its leader.'

Thus spake Hitler in *Mein Kampf* at least as early as 1926, when Mussolini had not yet to his credit any final accomplishment — not the blasting of the League of Nations, greatest of his feats, not the march on Addis Ababa, not even the jaunt into Albania — except the totally autocratic seizure of his native Italy: a man rather of words than of deeds, and the neologist forger of winged and felicitous slogans such as Fascist, Totalitarian, Corporative. But he seemed already very great — and rightly so — to Hitler, the obscure rioter in a Munich *Bierhalle*, the untiring scribbler in a Bavarian fortress.

Hitler now overtowers both the inspirers of his vigil, Bismarck and Mussolini. Much more, however, than the Prussian chancellor — who for all his iron had fallen, and whose unfinished building of Empire had spelled disaster to the coming German generations — the Latin Duce had been and remained paramount in the Führer's formative years. A Southerner and a Catholic by birth, Hitler's mind was steeped in schemes of Latin and Roman rather than of Northern Protestant make. One annotation among others is suggestive in the Alvin Johnson edition of *Mein Kampf*. We learn from it that the 'Senate chamber and study in the Brown House, Munich, are proudly displayed as examples of the Führer's [artistic] work. In the first, which is primarily a study in red leather, the Swastika serves as an allusion to the SPQR of ancient Rome [*Senatus Populusque Romanus*].'

This is indeed the repetitious story of Roman-German political intercourse from the deepest Middle Ages, at least as early as Charlemagne and earlier, to our daily news. Whatever the Latin imagination brewed on behalf of the resurrection and perpetuity of Roman Empire and Roman unity, the Germans stole home, elaborating the politico-literary plagiarism into a thing of flesh and blood, and whipping a feeble daydream into a galloping nightmare. Thus stuffed with a political theory which they had grabbed from their Latin vassals, the German war lords and Emperors of the Middle Ages in the real clank of their armors could scoff at the empty clang of Roman rhetorics. It was as far back as the middle of the twelfth century that a deputation of Romans, 'filled with a vain conceit of their own importance,' approached Frederick Barbarossa and dwelled in 'high-flown language on the dignity of the Roman people and their kindness in bestowing their sceptre on him, a Swabian and a stranger.' Frederick's anger — thus James

Bryce dramatizes the event — did not let them finish: 'Who are ye, that usurp the name of Roman dignities? Your honor and your authority are yours no longer . . . it was not you who chose us, but Charlemagne and Otto . . . conquered by their own might the Imperial crown. That Frankish might is still the same. Wrench, if you can, the club from Hercules.'

In much the same way Hitler, the re-awakened Barbarossa, would have spoken long since to the reawakened Arnold of Brescia, Benito Mussolini, if his German Reich and his German race flooded a seemingly dikeless world as they did in the high tide of the Middle Ages. But there are dikes to-day — at least France and England close by and a mystery westward, America, which might change into a threat, and a darkness eastward, Russia, which might cover an ambush. It is not so much the reverence and affection of Hitler, however sincere, for his Latin teacher and precursor that make of Hitler's Germany, so far, a courteous associate of the Roman country, as the sore need for an adequate alignment. Very realistically Hitler, from the very start of his career, thundered against those German patriots — obviously masquerading Jews — who, appalled by the enslavement of German South Tirol under the Roman rule, clamored for the revindication of those specks of *Deutschtum*, only to balk the German alliance with the Latin man of providence and make of all Germany the thrall of Westerners, Jews, and Bolsheviks. Risen to power, he faithfully dismissed the claim on South Tirol; the brown-black axis ran through all the width of Europe, parted the West from the East. Actions and counteractions have mixed and to some extent fused in one the competing or conflicting desires of the Roman orator and the German lord. They must fall or win together. A rupture of the axis remains and ever was a childish dream, a thought born of incompetent wishes. But the outlook on the rationally

predictable future discloses a gaping contrast between the eventual destiny of Hitler's Third Reich and of the Duce's Imperium Romanum. If they fall, they fall. If they win together in peaces of the Munich sort or in triumphant war, the German Kaiser or Führer high on the Alpine ridge would be the real monarch of Europe with or without South Tirol; and the Roman Emperor, whatever the size of his nominal holdings, whatever even the perfunctory glamour of, say, a double coronation on the Capitoline Hill and under Saint Peter's Cupola, would shrink to a crawling puppet in the shadow of German heels.

Thus the idle Latin scheme of a reborn Roman unity is transmuted into a real thing by the reality of German power. Many to-day underestimate the actual strength of the Duce, his influence still leading at times the Führer, but more than a glint of prophetic truth pierces the fog of misinformed opinion. Nothing short of a miracle of history or a timely revolution in Italy could save Italy from defeat in war or from servitude to Germany in the growing disproportions of a successful 'peace.' But on the other side there are chances, at least theoretically, for a German world unity. Germany is to-day, as she was for nearly fifteen centuries, the sole heir to the Roman political will, whenever that will comes to probate. It may be that the Holy Roman Empire, from Charlemagne's Aachen to Vienna's Hofburg and the Gardens of Potsdam, seldom was a thing of loveliness, often was unholy. But it never was, neither is it to-day, a hollow verbiage bound for silence, a writhing wish doomed to dust.

This difference in historical structure accounts somewhat for the striking difference in character and biography between Duce and Führer. The former is all color, change, adventure, unexpectedness. Hitler has practically no biography. So little of him can be told that in the perspective of world history it amounts to little more than nothing.

There he is, empty of individual happenings (or emptied of them by his own unrelenting purpose), as emblematic as the Duce is problematic — the statuary standard-bearer of an obsession, a fanatic, as his Southern precursor is an adventurer in the gamble of chance. Thinned to the transparency of its primary impulses, the character of Mussolini reveals the restless upstart, the reckless anarchist who, from the confusion of his wasteful youth, picked the tradition of the Roman Empire as an opportunity for cheat and feat. This tradition of a mission of the Roman chosen people had been extinct for ages in our factual world; to build on it is to build, less than on moving sands, on echoing sounds. But the Führer had and has behind him the legitimacy of an unbroken continuity for those very ages in the course of which the limelight of factual history seldom if ever deserted the German race. Hitler's idea of the German race as the people chosen by nature's divine right to rule the universe may be and is inhuman; it also may be and is, for the scientist's mind, a blunder as gross as the transgression is hurtful for the humanitarian's heart; it finally may be headed, and head Germany and the world, for a major disaster. But this blunder or crime is made of the stuff which things of flesh and will are made on; it has substance in it; it is a creed, father of deeds, not a strain or refrain.

Hence, too, the unmistakable difference of accent when the Duce talks of the state as of the entity supreme in human life, as of the only standard of thought and action, and when the Führer stresses in his own way the same basic tenet. One feels that Mussolini might have felt otherwise — indeed, he felt and taught otherwise at other times of his life — whereas Hitler is 'immovably centred,' if we are allowed to apply to the most distasteful of heroes Emerson's definition of heroism.

'Then the basic realization is that the State represents not an end, but a means.

It is indeed the presumption for the formation of a higher human culture, but not its cause. On the contrary, the latter lies exclusively in the existence of a race capable of culture.' Thus wrote Hitler in *Mein Kampf*.

What he means by culture, God or Beelzebub knows. But when he speaks of his German state as the means to the totalitarian City of Man, usurping the City of God, Hitler — an occasional liar in ephemeral tactics — is permanently true to himself.

III

So true is he to himself, so candidly aware of a suprapersonal avocation coinciding with the highest scope of man, that he unhesitatingly flings the value of his personality to a sacerdotal level. The thinking and doing of this remorseless foe of all established religions, of this Wagnerian fan and alleged worshiper of Teutonic deities, are modeled on orthodox patterns. More exactly, on the Roman Catholic religious pattern.

Both the Duce and the Führer grew up in a Catholic entourage. The Duce himself, a frantic anticlerical and anti-Catholic all through his long youth, preserved, in the very fibres of his fantasy and logic, the Catholic imprint which he had received from his devout mother and the Salesian Fathers whose pupil he had been in early boyhood. But, here again, what in the Latin is mere habit or blind emotional response is a conscious behavior, a substantial purpose, in the German Caesar.

Few out of multitudes whose attention is blunted by the daily clamor about the daily episodes of Hitler's fight against the Jewish and the Christian churches, few even among the most careful readers of *Mein Kampf*, realize that Hitler sang, sometime in the past, a glowing hymn to the Catholic Church as the paragon of political wisdom, and that he still clings to the meaning and feeling of *Mein Kampf's* most surprising paragraph.

'Here,' he wrote, 'the Catholic Church

can be looked upon as a model example. In the celibacy of its priests roots the compulsion to draw the future generation of the clergy, instead of from its own ranks, again and again from the broad masses of the people. But this particular significance of celibacy is not recognized by most people. It is the origin of the incredibly vigorous power that inhabits this age-old institution. This gigantic host of clerical dignitaries, by uninteruptedly supplementing itself from the lowest layers of the nations, preserves not only its instinctive bond with the people's world of sentiment, but it also assures itself of a sum of energy and active force which in such a form will forever be present only in the broad masses of the people. From this results the astounding youthfulness of this giant organism, its pliability and its steel-like will-power.'

Thus he transferred his celibacy into a Freudian sublimation and painted the latter in stern Catholic colors. The transference, which also was a return to the Austrian's childhood, made of him the candidate for an anti-Papacy or super-Papacy more gigantic, if possible, than the Roman Church itself, with its pliability moulded for a temporal purpose and its will-power rooted in earth and blood.

Yet there was and is a Pope in Rome. Of the three kings in Central Europe, he is the most powerful, although with no territory under his throne except a palace with a garden, Vatican City, and no other army than a handful of guards.

Some aspects of this unique kingship have been often described. Seemingly disembodied, an Empire of the Soul, it embraces a larger number of subjects than any terrestrial power except the British Empire. But the links welding into a flexible unity the British citizenry, scattered across the seven seas, are variable and often loose; the allegiance of transmarine vassal nations to the British metropolis may thin away, as nominal as the authority of the British king — a crown rather than a head — over the

republican oligarchy managing, from Westminster, its ganglionic commonwealth. Unitary discipline, on the contrary, is supreme in the Roman Spiritual Empire. It stops before no tide or divide. More than three hundred million, whether Irish Americans from a pedigree of thirty Catholic ancestors, or recent Chinese neophytes, or converts in the African jungle, are pledged to the same obedience as the few hundred officials within the gates of the Vatican. Nay, distance magnifies the influence. All human shortcomings shot off by the curvature of the earth, holiness and eternity alone radiate from St. Peter's dome, firm as a firmament.

Nothing, however, save the number and geographic omnipresence of its lieges, would be so striking in the papal power if it affected the soul of man alone and his supernatural destiny, unconcerned with politics and economics in this transient world below. But that is not so, current opinions notwithstanding; and, in the Roman Church, the temporal and the eternal, the worldly and the overworldly, are as closely interrelated as they needs must be in any religion or metaphysics. True it is that the dogma of papal infallibility confines the power of the Pope to the fields of faith and morals; but no pope or doctor, so far, has drawn recognizable lines between 'morals' and a field of politics indifferent to morals and hence irrelevant to the Church. The very concept of political action as dissociated from ethical values sounds scandal to any believer's ears.

Historically, the Roman Church rose with Constantine the Great, sixteen centuries ago, as the wielder of spiritual authority beside and within the frame of the Roman Empire. Its doctrine grew to full maturity in the same fourth century, and the Christian shepherd already was heir apparent to almost all of Antiquity, Oriental mysticism and Greek philosophy as well, Jewish Tora and Roman Law. In the wake of many pre-

cursors, Innocent III, at the turning of the twelfth century, definitely knew that he had received the mitre as a sign of spiritual command, and the crown as the symbol of temporal supremacy. He also knew that the Italian nation had been privileged for all times with a God-given primacy in the world unity under the twofold emblem of the tiara.

The sceptre of this Holy Emperor or King of Kings — a Christian incarnation of Plato's philosopher-king — proved, however, much shorter than his pastoral. It never reached beyond the boundaries of a narrow state belting from sea to sea the Italian peninsula. This state's size grew slowly from the deep Middle Ages to the Renaissance; then it stopped short, and the dwarfed condition of its inhabitants, their numbness and poverty, refractory to all advancement of Western civilization, could not possibly be interpreted, by Protestant or free-thinking nations, as tokens of administrative genius and of ability, in the papal rule, to help a more comprehensive crowd in the pursuit of temporal happiness beside and before the attainment of timeless bliss. Shortly after the middle of the nineteenth century, liberal Italy, acting as the spearhead of aggressive Protestantism and rational science, smashed the papal state to nothingness.

But the seed of resurrection sprouted from the disaster. The *corpus delicti*, the evidence of the Church's failure in the management of temporal things, having been removed from all eyes, the Church survived revindicated, a faultless pretender. Against the deadly challenge of modern society it fought back, with weapons from which that conceited society was only too flimsily shielded: weapons of words, in obdurate Latin. Indeed, nearly all contemporary observers deemed the dogmas and encyclicals of Pius IX to be nothing more than mere words, impotent lamentations of a dispossessed sovereign. They were much more. They started the age in which we

live and may die. This age is the second Counter-Reformation, much larger than the first. If, through the Counter-Reformation of four centuries ago, the Catholic Church succeeded barely in stemming the rise of Protestantism, it now, in the same spirit, is attempting to overwhelm whatever rose in mind and society, out of Renaissance and Protestantism, in a spirit of rebellion and schism. Jonah, as a reborn prophet of mediæval authority, slowly emerged from the whale, in stormy waters.

Between Fascism-Naziism and Roman Catholicism there have been giving and taking, coincidence, parallelism, and clash. In braving, with stupendous single-mindedness, the tenets of a rational and liberal society, in raising against the wavering dogmas of science and progress the unshakable ones of revelation and emotion, the Church had done a pioneering without which the intellectual onslaught of Fascism and Naziism would hardly ever have been conceivable. In preserving, through so many centuries, an elective but absolute monarchy in which the restricted electoral body is appointed by the monarch himself and all power descends from on high, the Church also had provided Fascism and Naziism with the fundamentals of their institutions. Even by its disproof of class warfare and restatement of the mediæval concept of corporate society, the Church had taken its place among the precursors of Fascist and Nazi economy.

True, the Catholic monarchy may also claim, and rightly in many ways, the title of a democracy — nay, of a democracy par excellence. But Fascism and Naziism raise the same claim, and they too are right in their own ways, if democracy is the principle of the people's being ruled for the people (although not by the people), with all Fascists and Nazis of Aryan stock — regardless of class origins — equal under the lawgiver and his law. The Duce himself used to be a penniless wanderer, the Führer a small jobber. In

the same way, there is no objection to a cardinal's having spent his childhood in a shanty or to a saint's having walked the earth in the tatters of a pariah. Neither is there any honest reason for doubting the sincerity of the Church's desire to promote a better justice in behalf of the forgotten man and to bring about, through charity from on high and appeasement from all sides, a sensible compromise among conflicting interests and classes. This social program was named 'Christian Democracy.' The inward attitude, however, of official Catholicism toward political democracy — that is, toward the representative system and the doctrine of the people's being ruled by the people — was manifested too often and in a too consistent set of major and minor examples to leave margin for question marks. That a dissenting cardinal was bluntly stripped of his purple and confined as a simple monk, by Pius XI, to the obscurity of conventual life may still be laid aside as a case of spiritual indiscipline and discipline. But in clearly temporal matters, one among the many rash gestures of that same pontiff seems to be more expressive than a whole treatise of political science. In 1929, he was endowed by the Duce with an area of sovereignty, however small, and with a number of subjects, however modest. He certainly did not summon a miniature parliament, neither did he call his citizens to cast secret ballots for the election of councilors. With one stroke of the pen, he united in his hand the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary powers of his state.

Not that the Church to-day would care to try shaking the pillars of the democratic states. She prefers to seep through their frittered foundations, when they are frittered; and otherwise assumes that all power — hence also a democratic power — comes from God. But similarity breeds familiarity, and it is no wonder if the Church, a paragon of absolutism, cherishes her own image in the absolute monarchies, hoping even

against hope that the day will come when kings with firm hands will bend all human hearts to the true faith, while nothing can be taken for granted in electoral democracies where the gust of a popular whim can blow to naught the crop of toilsome seasons.

Of clashes between the papacy and Fascism — and, much bitterer, between the papacy and Naziism — the daily papers have been full for years; and it seems likely that their capacious pages will brim over with such material for years to come. History, more perspective than chronicle, perhaps will stress the facts above the words. Facts, among others, are: that the Roman Church, at least since 1929, harbored Italian Fascism behind her moral authority; that she blessed the eagles flying to the conquest of Ethiopia as a vanguard of the Cross; that she did not mourn over the wreckage of the League of Nations; that she thrust a spear, spiritual but lethal, into the side of Republican Spain, whereupon Franco's triumphant veterans kissed in long file the ring of the newly crowned Pope; that she endorsed the spirit of Munich, sloganed 'peace with justice'; that she opposed the alliance of the Western might and Russia with an industry bordering on the efficiency of a veto. On the whole, the weight of the Roman Church has helped much to tilt the scales of power-politics in favor of Duce and Führer.

Hitler, the apprentice, had learned much from Austrian Christian Democracy. In a wrathful paragraph of *Mein Kampf*, he turned his thumb down on the traitors — obviously, masquerading Jews — who kept afire the ultramontane question. 'The Jew, in any event, achieved the desired goal: Catholics and Protestants were merrily at war with one another and the deadly enemy of Aryan humanity and of all Christendom laughed up his sleeve.' Obviously he thought was, and still probably is, that the churches — above all, the most po

erful of all — will, if conveniently tamed, prove invaluable agencies of the Cæsar's will, *instrumenta regni*. After all, the swastika contains the cross. The papacy's dream runs a different course. To be sure, anti-Christian blasphemy, implicit or explicit in the Duce's funambulatory oratory, is hard to bear (even with a smile); mail-fisted in the Führer or his associates, it is anathema. But these clay-footed colossi may crumble on their faces — or God may change their hearts. At any rate they may prove to have been those who, led in the night, opened the ways of the Lord. The day may dawn when a ruler of Italy will be, to say the least, as filially dutiful as the Countess Matilda, chatelaine at Canossa; when a German Cæsar will be trudging again to Canossa, and kneeling before the King of Kings.

IV

All three kingships along the totalitarian Axis of Central Europe — Ducedom, Führerdom, and Papal Christendom — are emanations from the ancient, unextinguished sun of Roman Unity. But the fourth kingship too, the Eastern Monarchy, draws primarily its energy and direction from that same source, although steering them along a baffling parallax which most telescopists have failed so far to identify.

The fourth kingdom is the U.S.S.R. It is the legitimate heir — unaware of its legitimacy — to Byzantine Empire and Czarist conquest. They both endeavored to mould the classical unitary idea, which they somehow traced back from the Roman Cæsars to Alexander the Great, in Oriental patterns, as if they performed symbolically, century after century, the wedding of Alexander with the princess of Persia. Or they diluted the consistency of that idea in the shapelessness of a fanatic, intuitional mood.

The Basileus or Czar of to-day is one who has changed his name and wiped out the memory of his origin, as Popes

and Cæsars do. No longer Joseph Dzugashvili, Zozo the Georgian, he is Stalin, the Man of Steel. He wears no crown, an outfit for nominal kings (except the Roman King of Kings); he bears no sceptre, an implement yet exhumed by none, except Göring, the Fat Pretender. Even the title of Leader would sound too ceremonial for Stalin, whose most ambitious attributes are those of a Secretary or Commissar, and whose military coat, bare of ribbons and medals, fits his broad chest almost as loosely as a workman's blouse. Yet his kingship is absolute, and the idea behind it is world-embracing. His subjects in Europe and Asia outnumber any other self-ruling political aggregate on any continent; his following beyond the boundaries spreads as universally as the Catholic Church and vies with the latter's masses in the passivity of obedience and in the militancy of service as well.

Like the Duce's childhood in his mother's lap and in the Salesian Fathers' school, or the Führer's adolescence in the magnetic field of the Christian Social Party of Austria, Stalin's early years were imbued with religious suggestions of the orthodox kind. It was Russian or Russianized orthodoxy, in his case, Eastern Christendom. A riotous and violent lad, Zozo Dzugashvili nevertheless was the most promising pupil, a promised priest, in the Seminary at Tiflis. Much as a consequence of the exceptional catechumen's brooding and doing, the Seminary evolved to an underground preparatory school for revolutionary Marxism. The black lamb was ousted. 'The pupil Joseph Dzugashvili has been expelled from the institution owing to socialistic heresy.' Now he became the officiant of another orthodoxy, as uncompromising as the creed of his clerical teachers — or more. When, a few years later, he inspected that strange School of Communism that had been founded on the island of Capri under the auspices of Gorki and Luna-

charsky, he sombrely despised all those 'heretics': among others the 'God-builders,' who were suspected of trying to reconcile religion and Socialism. He stuck emphatically to Lenin's atheistic materialism. He was, however, misinformed about himself: as inadequately in touch with the deep layers of his nature as, for that matter, Lenin was and Marx had been in other ways with their own. Seldom the apostate's god lets him out of his shadow.

The pulp's decay already is slackening the fibres and yellowing the borders of an unusual book, by Dr. Fritz Gerlich, published in the short-lived Socialist Bavaria of Kurt Eisner. Its truths are heavily dosed with error and strained by overstatement; yet some of them deserve to survive the perishable stuff on which they are printed and the fleeting circumstances from which they rose. Truthful, in the main, is the title itself: *Communism as a Doctrine of the Millennium*. And the first introductory sentences strike a note which should sound familiar, but does not, to all thinking minds. 'Most people nowadays,' says Gerlich, 'fail to understand the Communist movement because they have been accustomed to see in it and in its father, Marxist Socialism, nothing else than an economic theory. In its reality, however, Marxism as well as any other form of modern Communism belongs in the category of religious movements. More precisely, it is an attempt to build a new religion.' Metaphysical character, for that matter, he adds, is recognizable in many Communist doctrines of the past, at least as far back as Plato's *Utopia*. Concerning contemporary events, we may condense his basic concepts in the statement that the Book of Revelation was as powerful, in the subconscious drive of the Russian Revolution, as the *Communist Manifesto* in its conscious will.

We also may state that a thin but unbroken thread of continuity, in an emotional disagreement about the ulti-

mate destiny of mankind on earth, runs through the rambling and confused theological dispute between the Eastern and the Roman Churches all through the ages. In the Roman Church's cosmic picture, God's kingdom on earth receded towards a dimmer and comparatively irrelevant background; it stood in fuller light somewhere in the foreground of Eastern religion and of its poetic and political derivatives. Besides the contrasting shades of Oriental and Occidental mysticisms, historical differences account for the different attitudes. The Roman Church, on the whole, remained grounded in the territory of the Western Roman Empire and consistently drew its nourishment from the complexes of its origins in the Roman social and political soil. It had been born of terror and persecution at the hands of Roman emperors. These circumstances had driven both Paul and Peter — agreeing at least on this one issue — to the doctrine of the Christian's plenary conformism and supine submission to the worldly powers that be, even though they be Neronian, in order that the Church might perhaps be left free in her catacombal or outdoor pursuit of otherworldly happiness. The anti-Neronian manifesto of the Book of Revelation, necessarily wrapped in forbidding riddles, could not be much heeded; and the subsequent vicissitudes of the mediæval and modern Church, caught between her own shortcomings in her own rickety temporal state and the intricacies of her diplomacy amidst and against the mighty of the earth, grooved more and more deeply her trend toward a bliss-haloed pessimism, making of this earth a valley of tears, of justice here below a licit but deluding desire, of misery and sorrow a trial hard to bear but short, and eventually a Godspeed for endless reward. Much as lofty prophets like Joachim of Floris or naïve saints like Francis of Assisi may have strained to bridge the gap between Heaven and earth, Heaven and earth

drifted farther apart, and the official Church could not help crystallizing as an accomplice or at best a tolerant witness of political oppression and social iniquity — a distiller, in Marxian language, of 'opium for the people.'

But in the East, whatever the iniquities or atrocities, Christianity of a sort felt secure in the hands of the ruler wielding both the temporal and the spiritual power. The Basileus or Czar not only could, he *must* promise — although, perforce, within the unpredictable delays of eternity and time — celestial bliss and terrestrial welfare alike: 'Heaven and some of this too.' In such conditioning, the eschatological hope of the Millennium could brave the harshest winds. It bloomed anew, with efflorescences of unexpected glamour, in the sacroprofane Russian literature of the nineteenth century. Both Tolstoi and Dostoevski bid for 'Heaven and all this too.' They, and many others with them, indignantly flayed the Churches playing up the hope of Heaven against the hope of Man. Their anger's gleam was focused on the biggest of all Churches: Roman Catholicism, with its enslavers and Inquisitors. Atop the pyramidal diatribe a pun burst like a fire-cracker: Andreev's cardinal in his *Satan's Diary* (1919) exclaiming: '*Vade Petro, Satanas*' — 'Go, Satan, to St. Peter's, where thou belongest.' It is from this hoary and yet evergreen tradition that men like Lenin and Stalin inherited their God's kingdom on earth.

To be sure, it is a kingdom of God without God.

It also seems past doubt that it is not yet a kingdom of peace and plenty where everybody sits, even if only allegorically, 'under his vine and under his fig tree.' The history of its twenty-two-year growth is honeycombed with error and terror. It is also likely that the Russian kingdom of God without God has its cornerstones rooted in the sands of a faulty or disputable economic doctrine; and — were that not so, were

Marxist economy a quintessence of perennial truth — a society founded on the belief that economic justice alone, without any metaphysical chart or cosmic compass, will take man from prehistory to history and from all lands to the one promised land resembles anyhow the cripple marching toward a noble goal on his one leg, perhaps a wooden one.

But F. A. Voigt, author of *Unto Caesar*, that most brilliant advocate of British churchgoing Toryism and of its foreign policy, sails treacherous waters when assailing as blasphemy all 'secular religions' — Russian Communism above all — which claim God's kingdom for man on earth. He certainly does not mean that Gardens of Eden with trout-swum rivulets should be glossed over as one more trifling adjunct to the many irrelevancies which an inscrutable providence has forced on the British leisure class. Yet, for all his learning and piety, he just glosses over the basic script of Christendom, the Lord's Prayer asking for God's kingdom to come and for His will to be 'done in earth as it is in heaven.' Neither is there anything else in the Gospels or in the Acts of the Apostles which countenanced, from the social and economic angle of Christ's Christianity, the most reverent rector's ukase expelling from the Tiflis Seminary 'the pupil Joseph Dzugashvili, owing to socialistic heresy.' It is not Socialism, not Marxist Communism, that smacks of heresy on that score.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church — whatever possibly the archaisms of her philosophy, whatever certainly the nemeses of her commitments to plutocracies and tyrannies — fights behind impregnable bulwarks when she strikes at the savage metaphysical nakedness of Russian Communism.

Both equally defective, although in opposite ways, they yet emerge, Roman Catholicism and Jewish-Russian Communism, — much above the levels of Fascism and Naziism, of French Parlia-

ment and British aristocracy, — as the giant fighters in our world.

They share in variable measure right and wrong, strength and weakness, light and night.

V

The third branch of Christianity, Protestantism, weakened in a cluster of twigs. Its fragmentary multiplicity, often insignificant, curtailed it of expansive power and lastly even imperiled its resistance to the resurgent push of totalitarian systems.

Great Britain, inspired by an intelligentsia in which the defeatists or skeptics and the Catholic relapsers are no longer a minority, can hardly any longer be listed as a Protestant country. The Protestant spirit, as recast by the lay philosophies of the eighteenth century, still is operative behind the ruling class of France; there, however, calcified in bourgeois rationalization, it forfeited most of its religious stamina. But Protestantism, in its permanent essence, still is the vital breath of the United States, the one extant advancing democracy in our age; and in this, its young body, it does not seem as yet to be ripe for defeat.

In an inner build-up of which the average American is scarcely or not at all aware, Calvinism evolved into an optimist Christianity, with theology open to the interpretative changes of science and language, and with predestination watched by the human will, Grace manifest in works. There coil the springs of American virtue: fortitude with hope. The hope is of God's kingdom on earth, in the unspeakable presence of the unknowable God.

Of the five kingdoms in the white world, this is the remotest from the Roman pattern of unity — whether blueprinted in Rome, or disfigured in Germany, or palimpsested in Moscow. Yet, the ideal of classical political theory nowhere and never came as close to fulfillment as in the American Constitution.

In interstate relations, the ideal of the best classical ages often was federalism; in domestic institutions it was a trinitary harmony — seemingly as unattainable as it evidently was desirable — of the spirit of democracy with the spirits of aristocracy and monarchy. This ancient ideal was fused in America with seventeenth-century Protestantism and eighteenth-century philosophy. The American spirit of democracy as represented in Congress, its spirit of aristocracy as embodied in the Supreme Court, and its spirit of monarchy as symbolized in the President, would meet, in the main, the approval of Cicero and Aristotle.

The President is an elective, popular king, limited in authority and time. His power stands as much below the all-might of the autocrats in the bulk of Europe as it rises above the pageantry of the nominal kings on Europe's fringes. The line of kings, or Presidents, stretching over one hundred and fifty years of American history, is at least as remarkable as the sequence of the Roman Good Emperors from Nerva to Marcus Aurelius, or of the irreproachable Popes of the Second Counter-Reformation from Pius IX to Pius XII.

The mediocre among them floated passively on the current of American destiny. The worst — seldom, if ever, conspicuously bad — dared not run counter to it. In the best of them, from the founders to Lincoln and from Lincoln to Woodrow Wilson and F. D. Roosevelt, the destiny or historical will which lies instinctually sunk in the masses sprang to greater or lesser intellectual clarity again.

Roosevelt, in inner and social policy, seems surer of the ends than of the means. In the half-obscurity of the environment, he half-gropingly reaches for some new direction which leads neither forward to the Fascist penitentiary or hive nor back to wild *laissez faire* and class warfare. Clearer in international sight, he knows — as Wilson, his precursor, did — that American isolation-

ism, besides being a slow polysyllabic catchword in the airplane age, is one more semi-collectivized expression of that very same rugged individualism and atom-splitting fragmentariness which doomed Protestantism to this pallor, Democracy to this plight.

Wilson was beaten. Much of Roosevelt's fortune hangs on the forthcoming Fascist war or Fascist peace in Europe and Asia.

To date, it still seems as if a longer time should elapse ere a whisper, faintly audible to-day across the isolationist unison, becomes a voice, a call for America's inevitable leadership. To that whisper a writer, Clarence K. Streit, lately lent his words: 'Union now.' His 'now,' however, still sounds like an inverted historical present, the projection of an indistinct future into the actuality of desire.

Yet, in years or generations, a sixth king should come, *the* king: not a word-catapulting Duce, not a nightmare-whipping Führer, not a Guardian of incorruptible sepulchres, not a one-eyed Cyclopean shepherd of peoples, not a restricted president of *this* United States — but the President of All Men, the elective, popular, temporary, uncrowned, unfeathered ruler of the League of all Nations which must rise at last from the ashes of all prophets' frustrations.

The time may come when Hugo's announcement of the *République universelle* will not rebound against hollow echoes, when perhaps even Tennyson's 'Parliament of Man,' 'Federation of the

World,' will no longer elicit better-knowing smiles from a cruel wisdom.

A common purpose drives, to goals beyond their wills, the Five Kings of to-day. They all rose from anarchy; they all — in truth or error, or truth mixed with error — fight the anarchy from which they rose. Beneath the seething surface of discord, the deep waters of history flow toward the unity of Man.

This the New-Englandish school principal of Dorothy Canfield's *Seasoned Timber* knew very well. More confidently, his metaphor ran the surface of the waters. 'I meant to guess aloud that Fascism comes from something new in the air everywhere in our time. . . . From a new wind blowing over the world of men. . . . To this great wind, Fascism spreads black sails on a pirate ship. But that is not the fault of the wind. If we will but learn to set our sails it will carry us to undreamed goals of . . . into feeling as never before the oneness of mankind. . . .'

The new king should be the new Cyrus.

Him, all gods of all past Babylons would call — as Marduk, the god of Babylon, called Cyrus, the first world-king, when he entered bloodless the intact city of the god.

'In all lands everywhere Marduk searched, he looked through them and sought a righteous prince, after his own heart, whom he took by the hand. Cyrus, king of Anshan, he called by name, to lordship over all the world he appointed him.'

PAR L'AMOUR

BY FRANZ WERFEL

EVERY morning between ten and eleven, Bertrand, a bachelor, took the suburban train at the dreamy station of Le Vésinet for the St. Lazare. He was bound for 'his' Ministry, where, like so many of his literary colleagues, he held a sinecure. During his daily journeys Bertrand was in the habit of immersing himself in his newspaper — though 'immersing' is a somewhat exaggerated expression for his superficial skimming of headlines, to be forgotten almost immediately. For Bertrand, the bachelor, belonged to the invulnerable elect whom time and news could not injure — except for occasional unfriendly references to one of his brain children.

This day — a beautiful day in May — Bertrand, as usual superficially immersed in his newspaper, took no more notice of his surroundings than on any other day. Thus it happened that for some time he did not notice the captivating figure that had boarded the train at one of its casual stops and was now sitting across from him. The moment his eyes suddenly encompassed this figure he bitterly rued their neglect of the preceding minutes. It was a woman — no, a girl, apparently of very tender age. The delicate figure, dressed in a kind of mourning, or half-mourning, formed a sharp contrast to the remaining femininity present, whose informal, summerly-bare arms and legs seemed to multiply the intense daylight in the train with their merry flesh tints.

The girl across from Bertrand sat motionless, separated from her en-

vironment not merely by a little bit of space but by entire eras. From her patent-leather shoes to her polka-dotted veil she seemed like the charming shadow of a decade gone by. This ensemble, nevertheless, gave the impression of particular stylishness. The mysterious girl held her head lowered. Bertrand could see nothing of her face. The polka-dotted veil, wreathing the suggested radiance of her countenance, trembled with the vibrations of the train. Here and there a lock of brown hair escaped from it.

The beautiful one held her head lowered for the reason that she was reading, and possibly because she was a little shortsighted. Her reading matter appeared to be a large-sized paper-bound novel, printed in two columns. Bertrand wondered that such old-fashioned reading material, its text interspersed with pale though lively illustrations, was still on sale as it had been when he was a boy.

He tried to decipher the title of the story which held the girl so completely enthralled that she seemed to be present only in a cloud of blissful absence. He finally succeeded when, savoring the last few lines of a page, she slowly turned it with her pale, luminous fingers, encased in black openwork gloves — turned the page as though she could hardly bear to leave behind the lives she had just been reading about. *Par l'amour* was the title of the novel.

Like a radiant reflection the busy lines of the novel, *Par l'amour*, in them-

selves without doubt somewhat turgid, were mirrored upon the girl's invisible face. Bertrand only sensed this reflection. It seemed to him as though a rapidly run film with the extreme variations in light and shade were thrown upon a hidden screen, while he was able to see only the changes in light between the projector and the screen. Reunions and partings, kisses and shots, escapes and rescues — they all seemed to be miraculously accelerated by the avid time-scythe of the reading eye. Without having seen it, Bertrand knew this impatient eye, racing along the lines with such vehemence and such fervor that the harvested, read portion of the page seemed to wilt and turn gray. Even more than by the girl's quaint beauty and her unconscious grace he was delighted by her enraptured reading, her unconditional surrender to an old-fashioned work of fiction which most certainly would have stopped him on the first page. Whatever the story of *Par l'amour*, it was not until to-day, at the sight of the girl with the novel, that the true miracle of reading was revealed to him.

A few days ago Bertrand, the bachelor, had been forty-four years old. More than ever he had grown to be a victim of visual adventure — nor always purely visual; but recently a new and melancholy impatience had crept into his heart. How much longer would he have to wait for the little death — the death within Death? This 'little death' — a half-grown but full-blooded brother of the great Death — to Bertrand meant the dreaded moment when women would no longer answer his smile, when their eyes would no longer find him worthy of notice. Yet at the sight of the impassioned reader he was troubled, not by this new uncertainty of the end, but by the old uncertainty of the beginning — the feverish anxiety of the boy he had fancied lost in the immemorial past.

In the grip of this blushing sentiment he hardly knew himself any longer. His

body suddenly seemed in his way and he flattened it against the corner in embarrassment, lest he approach the virginal figure too closely. His anxiously halting gaze caressed the polka-dotted veil, the hidden radiance of the face, the slender and perfect throat whose creamy ivory merged into a lace collar of identical shade, the childlike arc of the breasts under the shimmering black silk. Still further his eyes groped, to the faint radiance of the hands encased in network gloves and holding the novel *Par l'amour*. Nor did he end his pilgrimage — blinking as though he were doing something forbidden — until from beneath half-closed lids he had caressed the delicate feet in their black hose.

Bertrand's imagination was not easily aroused. He worked hard over his books. He was known as a scrupulous master of his craft rather than as an inspired disciple of creative fantasy. An insistent urge to take stock of what was happening rose up before him again and again; but now, with the train roaring across the boat-and-flag-studded Seine and the faint perfume of the girl assailing him like a secret messenger who would not be put off — now pure reverie overcame his critical spirit. Might not this girl whom but five minutes ago he had never seen — this timeless beauty amid blatantly proffered female flesh, this mind lost and wrapped in an old-fashioned novel — might she not be that great miraculous chance assigned to him by fate at the last moment, in the forty-fifth spring of his declining life?

Superfluous question. She is that chance. They have been married since yesterday and are bound for their first vacation. He is not particularly surprised that between Now and Now lies the year of his courtship — a courtship so intense and ardent that he would have hardly thought himself capable of it. Again she is passionately reading just as she was then, when they first met in the train bound for St. Lazare. Is it

perchance one of his own books she is now reading? No, no! Let her not become confused by one of his carefully wrought sentences. Did he not spend an entire afternoon on the right bank of the Seine hunting up a large supply of old-fashioned paper-bound novels whose only advantage was that they resembled *Par l'amour*? And now she is lost and enthralled again — fortunately not in his own painstaking stylistic struggle for verisimilitude, but in this tense, sentimental love story which still floods her invisible countenance as though with a distant radiance.

Bertrand seriously considered whether he might be able to overcome in himself what he had come to think of as 'literary standards' — this queer intertwining of arrogance, veneration, snobbism, truthfulness, fear of reality, and resignation. To be sure, he did not aspire to the bold thought of ever being able to write a *Par l'amour* for his wife; but perhaps they might meet halfway — he as a writer and she as a reader.

Bertrand does not stir; he closes his eyes. He is determined not to disturb his young wife, even should she not raise her eyes from her book until the end of the journey. Is it not more than enough to be so close to the tardy miracle — this incredible fulfillment of a dissolute and wasted bachelor's existence? He is determined to avoid the youthful error of forming women in his own image. This time he will defend the living image of the women against himself — against his male lack of consideration, his greed, his gratification, and his urge to escape. Humbly, with eyes closed and egotism suspended, he will enjoy the heavenly boon of her existence, linked to him so airily yet so completely. Is it not for this reason that, in a tremendous access of noble-minded self-control, he has not touched her to this hour, not even with the antenna-like sensitivity of the tip of his middle finger? Is it not for this reason that he is constantly attempting to pacify his hungry senses, mutinying

behind the iron bars of his ego? The reading girl is not to become his mistress prematurely — not even by mental rape. In the spring of one's forty-fifth year one has, after all, — and high time, too, — achieved mastery of patience in love.

Without a trace of irony or criticism he had submitted to a family law whose labyrinthine and austere philistinism had stood still in our age as had the cool, almost forgotten house where she lived. The empty place of honor of her departed father at the head of the table was taken by an enlarged photograph. He had been scrutinized by the eagle eyes of twenty uncles and aunts, had to answer countless questions before the girl was permitted to depart as his bride. At the very last a centenarian was brought forward — the eldest of the tribe, who wore the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor on his hospital gown. With many reservations the elder gave his grudging blessing, which sounded more like a curse.

These thoughts were by no means completely formed in Bertrand's mind. The strength of the dream excited by the nearness of the reading girl was so new, so deep, that it was not actual pictures that passed through his mind, — that would have been nothing special, — but rather the almost imageless memory of pictures, of scenes lived through, obstacles overcome, long walks, talks, confessions: the full fragrant afterglow of things that never happened, not even in a dream. It was as though an old mountaineer should, at the mere mention of a peak, feel the breathless exhaustion of the completed ascent. Indeed, Bertrand's heart started to beat. The rebellious desire for love within him had already involved him so deeply with the reading girl that he became fearful. It would have been almost painful to pretend that nothing had happened. Even now there was a secret obligation which linked him to the unconsciously beloved. This last great

chance: was not the surprising vehemence of his emotion the call of destiny itself? When the train reached the station could he simply steal away like a banal Romeo, missing the last great chance of his life?

Bertrand began to consider how he might best and most naturally approach the girl. Beads of sweat appeared upon his forehead. Despite a life rich in amorous adventure he invariably found it very difficult to address a strange woman. He turned his head away from the girl, who was still deeply absorbed in her reading. Outside the window along a bleak wall ran an inscription in large black letters: 'Three miles to St. Lazare station.' Ten minutes! Bertrand knew the best and most natural way was likely to be before the trip was over, during the remaining ten minutes. A word, perhaps, about *Par l'amour* — a smiling word about this magic work which had the magnificent power to enthrall the reader so that she heard, saw, and felt nothing, not even his own admiring gaze. Bertrand's still undefeated literary standards made him decide that the expression 'admiring gaze' had perhaps better be dropped. With a queer look of pain he stared out at the houses, at the ugly back view of Paris. Suddenly he remembered: 'But I haven't even seen her face.' And he was amazed that he should have loved and cherished this unseen face for so long.

Slowly Bertrand turned his eyes. The girl had stopped reading. The paper-bound volume that contained *Par l'amour* lay in her lap, wilted, used up, sucked dry. The face he had not seen before was looking at him, quite frankly and attentively. It was a young face — not an eighteen-year-old face, as he had dreamed, but a face no older than twenty-five years. It was a handsome face, though not the beautiful one Bertrand had cherished in his mind with such certainty. And yet, his hands were cold with an almost indescribable feeling of disillusion.

Had this face been marred or scarred, had it been ugly or even merely pretty, Bertrand, the bachelor, would have at once forgotten his sweet love fantasy from Le Vésinet to St. Lazare, and relapsed into a superficial perusal of his newspaper. Had the face been that of a loose woman, the commonplace contrast between frivolous mouth and mourning attire might have provoked Bertrand, the bachelor, to seek just another adventure. The face, however, was neither of merely average beauty nor depraved. It was dominated by very dark and luminous eyes. Yet the eyes in this young face, despite their radiance, were evil and old. And they were (why?) accusingly directed upon Bertrand.

He withstood her gaze, though a feeling of discomfort pervaded him. Did the eyes of this woman pronounce the final verdict against him? Instead of the tardy chance of his lifetime, had he stumbled upon the 'little death' in the person of this viciously reading girl? No, it was a different hostility that struck him from these dark eyes which corroded and stabbed him. One thing he had clearly felt in his dreams: the hostility of her family against his kind, a hostility instinct in the girl. The waspish bourgeois character, he thought, full of calculating vulgarity and injured introversion. Even the ethereal figure, so strangely moving but two seconds ago, suddenly assumed a different significance. She was translucent and delicately proportioned — but in the same way that insects are, and her gaze was like a barbed insect bite. All the poison she had imbibed with the sentimental sweetness of *Par l'amour* she now spurted over to him, recognizing in him the enemy. She was defending *Par l'amour* against his arrogance. Between him and *Par l'amour* no bond could be established, even with the best of intentions. All the incomprehensible hatred of an aloofness dressed up in mourning was concentrated in this unyielding

gaze — a hatred in which the countless dead of the clan for whom one wore black year in, year out, had a part.

The accusing eyes did not waver from Bertrand. He, on his part, was ashamed to yield. And thus he returned the gaze with a thin and helpless smile. It was a complete defeat. Beyond doubt Bertrand's tender fantasy of love and marriage had reflected itself in the mind of the girl, arousing her sneering opposition. For inside as well as between human beings ten thousand times as much takes place as they themselves may know. The great luminous eyes still did not spare Bertrand, the unmasked. Like old

acquaintances before whom no dark corner is secure, they proclaimed their indictment. They wrought vengeance not merely for Bertrand's self-centred vision — they suddenly and painfully made him aware of his entire questionable nature. . . .

A few minutes later the graceful figure in subdued mourning had disappeared into the crowds at the St. Lazare station. Bertrand thought: 'I have fallen in love, married, lived in wedlock, and finally lost a long-drawn-out divorce action.' And as he descended the steps to the subway he was surprised to feel a marked sense of relief.

I AM NOT MYSELF

BY H. E. BATES

I

IT was summer when the Arnoldsons first asked me to go and stay with them. I could not go. I did not go until the following winter, on the fifth of January. It was bitterly cold that day, with thin drifts of snow whipped up from the ground like fierce white sandstorms, and there was snow on the ground almost all the time until I left four days later.

The Arnoldsons lived about seven miles from the nearest town. The house is quite ordinary: plain red brick, double-fronted, with large bay windows and a large brass-knocked front door and a spotless white doorstep. It is the color of a new flowerpot, and at the back in the garden there is a long pergola of bay trees which is like a tunnel leading to nowhere.

Before that day in January I did not know any of the Arnoldsons except

Laurence. We were at school together, but we had not seen each other for fifteen years. He was an architect, and I had written a letter to a paper about country architecture and he had seen it, and that was how the invitation to stay with them had come about. Laurence Arnoldson is of medium height, with straight dark hair brushed back. He wears plain ascetic-looking gold spectacles and is a man of meticulous habits — always paring his fingernails, polishing his glasses, splitting life into millimetres. His craze for exactitude and his contempt for people who have no time for it have made him a prig. He holds his head very high and you can see him looking down his nose at the world. The best thing about him is his eyes: they are weak, but they are a deep, rather strange shade of brown. There is something remote about them.

Laurence met me at the station that day in a fairly old but carefully kept Morris-Oxford, a four-seater. His father was with him. Mr. Arnoldson sat in the front seat, huddled in a black rug, with a large shaggy gray scarf muffled round his head. The scarf covered almost all of his face except his eyes. As Laurence introduced me I saw that his father's eyes had exactly the same deep remote brownness as the son's. It was snowing a little at the time, and Laurence had left the windscreen wiper working, and I could see the man's eyes mechanically following its pendulum motions. They slid to and fro like two brown ball bearings moving in gray oil, fascinated by the clear glass arc made by the wiper in the furred snow.

Laurence's father did not speak to me, and neither he nor Laurence exchanged a word as we drove slowly out into the frozen country. Their silence depressed me. I felt it had something to do with me. Now and then I made a remark, and once, about half a mile from the house, we passed a pond frozen over and I said something about skating and Laurence said:—

'Oh yes. That's the pond where my sister saw a fox walk across the ice yesterday.'

The Arnoldsons' house stands on what was formerly a private estate, and there is a private gravel road half a mile long leading up to it through fenceless fields that are planted with groups of elm and lime.

There is no Mrs. Arnoldson. She has been dead for thirteen years, and the house has been run for all that time by her sister, Aunt Wilcox. It was Aunt Wilcox who met us at the front door that afternoon, a dumpy woman with white hair scraped back sharply from her soap-polished face. She came out of the house briskly, shook hands with me without waiting to be introduced, and then helped Mr. Arnoldson out of the car. I thought at first he had been ill, but then as he stood upright I could see

that there was nothing wrong with him and that he was really a big and rather powerful man. His hands were excessively large-boned, and his head, hugely swathed in the great scarf, had a kind of ill-balanced power about it. It swayed slightly to and fro as he walked, as though it were loose on the spine. He did not speak to me.

Aunt Wilcox spoke with a strong Yorkshire accent. The Arnoldsons themselves are Yorkshire people, and the house is furnished in Yorkshire fashion: a rocking chair in my room, big dressers, patchwork cushions, heavy pink-and-gold tea services. In the large drawing-room the curtains are of some claret-colored woolen material, with plush bobbles, and they hang from great mahogany rods by mahogany rings that are like the rings on a hoopla. On the mantelpiece stand two large china dogs, spaniels, black and white. They are looking at something. They are extraordinarily lifelike.

I had been upstairs to unpack my things and had come down again and was looking at these dogs when Laurence came in to say that tea was ready. We went across the hall into the opposite room. It was about four o'clock, and the white reflected light of the fallen snow was prolonging by a few minutes the fall of darkness. We sat down to tea in this strange snow-twilight, Aunt Wilcox and Mr. Arnoldson opposite each other at the ends of the table, Laurence and I at the sides, I myself facing the window. The room was the exact reflection of the other. At the windows were the same sort of heavy, plush-bobbled curtains, and on the mantelpiece stood what might have been the same pair of china spaniels watching with extraordinary lifelike fixedness some invisible object between them.

We sat there eating and drinking, without saying much. Aunt Wilcox poured tea from a huge electroplated pot that might have held a gallon. The cups were like pink-and-gold basins.

I drink my tea very hot, and suddenly, as Aunt Wilcox was taking my empty cup, I saw someone coming up the road towards the house. I knew at once, somehow, that it was Laurence's sister. She was wearing a big brown coat, but no hat. Every now and then she stepped off the road on to the grass and wandered off, as though looking for something. She was like someone playing follow-my-leader with herself. Once she wandered farther off than usual, and in the half-darkness I lost her for a moment. Then I saw her again. She was running. She was running quite fast, and all at once she fell down on her knees in the snow and then ran on again. She was still running when she came to the house.

Two minutes later she came in. Her knees and the fringe of her coat were covered with snow where she had fallen down, and there was a small salt-sprinkling of snow on her hair. She was about twenty-three, but she looked much younger, and I shall never forget how she came in, out of breath, to look at us with the same remote brown eyes as Laurence's, intensely excited, with a stare that had nothing to do with earth at all.

'I saw him again,' she said.

For a moment no one spoke. Then Laurence said: 'Who? The fox?'

'Yes. I saw him run over the pond again and I chased him up through the park, and then just as I got near the house I lost him.'

No one spoke a word.

II

That evening, after supper, she told me more about the fox. She described him: how bright he was and good-colored, and how it was only in snowy or frosty weather that she saw him, and as she described him I saw him, bright, quiet, his back feet slipping from under him a little as he sloped across the ice on the small pond. I saw him as

she saw him, as she wanted me to see him.

She told me about the fox in two or three minutes. She talked rather quickly, but all her impressions were in reality created with her eyes; the images of fox and snow and frozen pond were thrown up in them with untarnishable clarity. Unlike a great many people, she looked straight at me while talking. Her eyes were full of great candor. They looked straight forward, with natural ardor. You felt that they could never look sideways. They had in them an unblemished honesty that was very beautiful and also very convincing, but also, in some way, empty.

For those two or three minutes we were alone. We had all had supper and we were going to play cribbage. Laurence had gone into his room to finish a letter and Aunt Wilcox was in the kitchen. Mr. Arnoldson had gone upstairs to find a new pack of cards.

'I'd like to come out in the morning,' I said, 'and see this fox.'

She did not say anything.

In a little while first Laurence and then Mr. Arnoldson and then Aunt Wilcox came back, and we made arrangements to play. Cribbage was the only card game all of us knew, and we decided to play in two pairs, for a shilling a horse, throw out scoring. We cut the cards, ace high, lowest out, and Aunt Wilcox said:—

'It's you, Christiana. Mind now, no edging.'

The girl had cut a two of hearts, and I realized suddenly that it was the first time I had heard her name.

Aunt Wilcox and I played together. We were both rather quick, downright players, quick to sense a hand. We always had the pips counted before we put them on the table. This was not the Arnoldson way. Deliberation, to me an increasingly irritating deliberation, marked everything Laurence and his father did. They weighed up their hands guardedly and put on poker ex-

pressions, giving nothing away. Just as the girl spoke with her eyes, they played with their eyes. Between the counting of the hands they did not speak a word.

The game was a near thing, and it looked, for a moment, as if Aunt Wilcox and I might die in the hole, but we got home and I noticed Aunt Wilcox pocketing the shilling. The Arnoldsons were not at all satisfied, and Laurence went over the last hand again, architect-fashion, checking up, before giving in.

Mr. Arnoldson looked at Christiana. I forgot to say that he had a large gray sheep-dog moustache. The expression of his mouth was thus hidden. The whole expression of his face was compressed into his eyes. They shone very brightly, with a rather queer glassy look of excitement.

For the second game Aunt Wilcox dropped out and Christiana took her place, playing with me. She was the quickest player I had ever seen. Every player gets now and then a hand he cannot make up his mind about, but that never seemed to happen to her. She played by instinct, second sight. She hardly looked at the cards. She kept her eyes on me. Yet she made up her mind before we began. I felt that, in some miraculous way, she could see through the cards.

All through the game she sat with her eyes on me. This constant but completely passionless stare had me beaten. It was hypnotic, so that whenever I looked away from her I was conscious of being drawn back. At first I thought it was deliberate, that she was simply trying hard to attract me. Then I got into the way of accepting her stare, of returning it.

But where there should have been some response, there was only an unchanged anonymity, a beautiful brown wateriness filled with a remote, quietly hypnotic strength. I saw her as one of those composite pictures of two people. Two personalities are fused and there

remains no personality, only some discomforting anonymity that fascinates.

During the game the tension between Christiana and her father increased. She was constantly one leap ahead of us all. She knew; we guessed. She had good cards, twice a hand of twenty-four.

All the time I could see Mr. Arnoldson fidgeting, his eyes generating new phases of resentment.

Aunt Wilcox seemed to understand this. The Christmas decorations were still hanging up in the house, sprays of holly, withering now, stuck up behind the pictures, and a wand or two of box and fir. Suddenly Aunt Wilcox said:—

‘Twelve days to-morrow. We mustn’t forget the decorations.’

‘Pancakes,’ Christiana said.

‘Fifteen two and a pair’s four and three’s seven,’ I said. ‘Pancakes?’

‘A north-country custom,’ Aunt Wilcox said. ‘You fry the pancakes with a fire of the evergreens.’

‘I think,’ Laurence said, ‘I have a pair.’ He slowly laid out his cards. ‘Mind you don’t set the chimney on fire.’

Suddenly Christiana’s hand was on the table. She counted it like a parrot saying something by heart. She had three sixes and a nine, and a three was up, and she rattled it off, running the words together, making eighteen. Eighteen was quite right, but Mr. Arnoldson sprang to his feet, as though he had not heard it.

‘Nineteen, nineteen! You can’t score nineteen!’ he shouted. ‘It’s not possible.’

‘I said eighteen!’

‘Eighteen is right,’ I began.

‘She said nineteen. I heard her. I distinctly heard her. You think I don’t know her voice?’

‘Eighteen!’ she said.

‘You said nineteen, and now you’re lying on top of it!’

He was on his feet, shouting at her,

gray with anger. Suddenly he began to shake violently and I knew he had lost control. He turned round and picked up the heavy mahogany Yorkshire chair he had been sitting in and swung it about, over his head. Aunt Wilcox got hold of Christiana and half pushed, half dragged her out of the room, and I automatically went after her, shouting after her as she ran upstairs in the darkness.

When I went back into the room, a moment later, Mr. Arnoldson was lying on the hearthrug, on his back, in a fit. The chair was lying smashed on the table where he had brought it down. He was clenching in his hands some bits of withered holly he had torn down from one of the pictures. His hands were bleeding, and it was a long time before we could get them open again.

III

The next morning Laurence, Aunt Wilcox, Christiana, and I sat down to a large and healthy breakfast — plates of porridge, lumps of rather fat beefsteak with fried mashed potatoes and eggs, thick toast and very strong marmalade, and the usual basins of tea. It was all very solid, very real. Unlike the behavior of Mr. Arnoldson on the previous night, it was something you could get your hands on and understand. Mr. Arnoldson did not appear at breakfast, and no one said anything about him.

During breakfast Laurence read his letters and said he had a couple of hours' work to do and would I mind amusing myself. In the afternoon we could go and look at some houses; there were one or two good stone mansions in the neighborhood. It was still bitterly cold that morning, but there had been no more snow. The snow of yesterday had been driven, like white sand, into thin drifts, leaving exposed black islands of ice.

I decided to go for a walk, and after breakfast I asked Christiana to come

with me. 'We could look for the fox,' I said.

Except for refusing, she did not say much. She was going to help Aunt Wilcox. About the fox she was very evasive. It might not have existed. She might not have seen it.

'I'll have a look for it myself,' I said.

She looked at me emptily, not speaking. Her eyes had lost completely the natural ardor and candor, both very childlike, which had infused the picture of the fox with reality and which had made me believe in both it and her. At that moment she could not have made me believe in anything.

I got my overcoat and gloves and went out. It was an east wind, steady, bitter, the sky a dull iron color, without sun. In the fields the grass had been driven flat by wind. The earth was like rock. In a scoop of the land a small stream flowed down between squat clumps of elder, catkins wind-frozen, cat ice jaggling out like frosted glass from the fringe of frost-burnt rushes on both banks. Farther on, a flock of pigeons clapped up from a field of white kale, clattering wings on steel leaves, spiraling up, gathering, separating again like broken bits of the dead sky.

I went on until I found the pond. I knew it at once because, a field away, I could see the road, and because of what Christiana had said about it. She had described the black sloe bushes barricading one side, the speared army of dead rushes, and a broken-down, now half-submerged cattle trough on which the fox, she said, had leapt and sat, and stared at her. The pond was covered with ice, and the ice in turn with the fine snow swept in a succession of smooth drifts across it.

I stood and looked at the pond. Then I walked round it. At the opposite point, by the cattle trough, I stood and looked at it again. On the cattle trough the light snow crusts were unbroken; on two sides of it, away from the water,

snow had drifted in long arcs, rippled and firm as lard. On the trough and in the snow drifted round it and all across the pond there were no marks of any fox at all.

IV

When I got back to the house, about twelve, Aunt Wilcox and Christiana were taking down the decorations. Most of the evergreens had been hung up in the hall, holly behind the pictures, sheaves of yew tied to the newel posts of the polished pine staircase, and a very dry spray of mistletoe hung from the big brass oil lamp. Aunt Wilcox and Christiana were putting the evergreens into a zinc bath tin.

'You're just in time,' Christiana said.

'Last come must last kiss,' Aunt Wilcox said.

'And what does that mean?' I said.

'You've got to kiss us both.'

Laughing, Aunt Wilcox stood under the mistletoe and I kissed her. Her lips were solid and sinewy, like beefsteak, and lukewarm wet. As she clasped me round the waist I felt her coopered, with stays, like a barrel. Then Christiana stood under the mistletoe and I kissed her. Just before I kissed her she looked at me for a moment. Her eyes had the same remote anonymity as on the previous day, the same tranquil but disturbing candor. As I kissed her she was quite still, without fuss. Kissing her was like kissing someone who was not there. It was a relationship of ghosts. For one moment I felt I was not there myself. The recollection of this unreal lightness of touch was something I carried about with me for the rest of the day.

That afternoon Laurence and I went for a walk. I asked after his father and he said he was better, but resting. We talked about him for a short time. He told me how he had begun as a pit boy in a Yorkshire colliery, but had worked himself up, and had later become a schoolmaster. Then the war broke out and he felt suddenly that he was wasted

in the classroom and had gone back to the pit, to become undermanager. After about six months there was a disaster in the pit, an explosion that had brought down a vast roof fall, entombing thirty-five men. Arnoldson went down for rescue work. For two days he could hear the voices of the entombed men quite clearly, then for a whole day he could hear them intermittently, then they ceased. But though they ceased Arnoldson fancied all the time he could still hear them, the voices of the dead, of men he had known, screaming or whispering in his mind more sharply than in life. He went on hearing these voices for weeks, the voices of people who were not there, until they broke him down. Christiana had been born about a year later.

Laurence spoke of his father with a slight impatience. He spoke as though, occupied himself with concrete things, the small matter of voices disturbing the spirit of another man had no material importance for him. It was clear that he did not believe in voices. From the subject of his father we went on to the subject of himself. I walked with head slightly down, mouth set against the wind, saying yes and no, not really listening, my thoughts in reality a long way behind me, like a kite on a string.

When we got back to the house, about four o'clock, I noticed a curious thing as we went past the dining room. The door of the room was open and I could see that one of the china spaniel dogs was missing from the mantelpiece. At the time I did not take much notice of this. I went upstairs to wash my hands and came down and went into the drawing-room. Christiana sat reading by the fire, but for about half a minute I did not look at her. One of the china dogs was missing from the mantelpiece.

It was only about ten seconds after this that I heard Laurence coming downstairs. His way of coming downstairs

was unmistakable. I heard his feet chipping the edges of the stairs with the precision of an engine firing in all its cylinders: the assured descent of a man who knew he could never fall down.

As he came into the hall Christiana suddenly went to the door and said in a loud voice:—

‘Tea’s ready. You’re just right.’

We went straight into the dining room. Christiana was last. She shut the door of the drawing-room after her. On the mantelpiece of the dining room the two china dogs sat facing each other.

All through tea I sat looking at Christiana. She sat looking at me, but without any relationship between the eyes and the mind. Her eyes rested on me with a stare of beautiful emptiness. It might have been a stare of wonder or distrust or adoration or appeal: I could not tell. There was no way of telling. For the first time I saw some connection between this expressive vacancy and the voices that Mr. Arnoldson had heard in his mind. Sitting still, eyes dead straight but not conscious, she looked as though she also were listening to some voices very far away.

Just as we were finishing tea, Aunt Wilcox said to me: ‘I hope you didn’t get cold this afternoon. You look a bit peaked.’

‘I’m all right,’ I said. ‘But I never really got my feet warm.’

‘Why don’t you go and put on your slippers?’ Christiana said.

‘I’d like to,’ I said.

So I went upstairs to put on my slippers, while Laurence went to write his evening letters, and Aunt Wilcox and Christiana cleared the table. It was Sunday, and Aunt Wilcox was going to chapel.

I came downstairs again in less than five minutes. Christiana was sitting by the fire in the drawing-room. The two china dogs sat on the mantelpiece. I looked at the dogs, then at Christiana, with double deliberation. She must have seen I was trying to reason it out, that

perhaps I had reasoned it out, but she gave no sign.

I sat down and we began to talk. It was warm; the small reading lamp imprisoned us, as it were, in a small world of light, the rest of the room an outer darkness. I tried to get her to talk of the fox. There was no response. It was like pressing the buttons of a dead doorbell. Once I said something about her father. ‘He’s asleep,’ she said. That was all. We went on to talk of various odd things.

She lay back in the chair, facing the light, looking quietly at me. I fixed my eyes on hers. I had a feeling, very strong after a few minutes, that she wanted me to touch her. All at once she asked me if I had ever been abroad. I said: ‘Yes, to France and Holland. That’s all. Holland is lovely.’

She did not say anything at once. She looked slowly away from me, down at the floor, as though she could see something in the darkness beyond the ring of light. Suddenly she said: ‘I’ve been to Mexico, that’s all.’ I asked her for how long. She looked up at me. Without answering my question she began to tell me about Mexico. She told me about it as she had told me about the fox, speaking rather quickly, telling me where she had been, reciting the beautiful names of the places, talking about the food, the color, the women’s dresses. I had a feeling of traveling through a country in a train, in a hurry, getting the vivid transient panoramic effect of fields and villages, sun and trees, of faces and hands suddenly uplifted. She described everything quickly, her voice quiet and regular, like a train passing over metals.

She described an episode about Indians—how she had gone up into the mountains, to a small town where there was a market, where thin emaciated Indians came down to sell things, squatting close together on the ground in the cold, with phlegmatic and degenerate eyes downcast. There a woman had tried

to sell her a few wizened tomatoes, holding them out with blue old veined hands, not speaking, simply holding the tomatoes out to her. Then suddenly, because the girl would not have them, the woman had squeezed one of them in a rage until seeds and juice ran out like reddish-yellow blood, oozing out of the fissure between her frozen knuckles. As the girl told it, I felt rather than saw it. I felt the bitter coldness of the little town cut by mountain winds and the half-frozen juice of the tomato running down my own hands.

She went on talking, with intervals, for about an hour. Once again, some time after she had told me about the Indian woman, I had the feeling that she wanted me to touch her. Her hands were spread out on her lap. I watched the light on them. I could see the slight upheaval of the white fingers, regular and intense, as she breathed, and this small but intense motion radiated a feeling of inordinate and almost fearful strength. The effect on me was as though I were looking down into very deep, not quite still water: an effect slightly hypnotic, slightly pleasurable, quietly governed by fear. I felt afraid to take my eyes away from her and I felt, also, that she did not want me to take them away.

After a time I did something else I knew she wanted me to do. I went and sat by her, in the same chair. I put my arms round her, not speaking a word. As I held her I could feel her listening. 'Perhaps she is listening,' I thought, 'for someone to come.' She did not speak. I could feel her fingers, outspread, clutching my back, as though she were falling into space. After a while she spoke.

'What did you say?' she said. I sat silent. 'What did you say?' she said. 'I thought I heard you say something.'

'No,' I said, 'I didn't speak.'

'Perhaps it was someone else,' she said.

I sat still. I did not say anything.

Her breathing was slightly deeper. All the time I could feel her listening, as though waiting for the echo of some minute explosion on the other side of the earth.

'Don't you ever think you hear the voices of people who are not here?'

'Everybody does that,' I said.

'I mean you.'

'Sometimes.'

'Often?'

'Not often.'

The small reading lamp stood on a table between the chair and the fireplace. I felt her stretch out her hand towards it. About us, for one moment, the house seemed dead still. She put out the light. I heard the small click of the switch freeing us, as it were, from the restriction of light. She put her hands on my face, held it. I remember wondering suddenly what sort of night it was, if it was starlight, whether there was snow.

'Can you see me?' she said.

'No.'

'I can see you.'

I felt her withdraw herself very slightly from me. Then I knew why she could see me. I was sitting facing the window and through the slits of the dark curtains I could see blurred snow-white chinks of moonlight.

V

We did not have supper that night until nine o'clock. We had Yorkshire ham and pork pie, cold apple tart with red cheese, mince pies and cheesecakes, with large basins of strong tea. Aunt Wilcox had pickles, and towards the end of the meal we pulled half a dozen crackers that had been left over from Christmas. Out of her cracker Christina had a tall white paper hat in the twelfth-century style, pointed, like a cone. As she put it on I got an instant impression that the dark brown eyes under the white cap looked darker than ever, and that they were slightly strange,

not quite real, and for the first time it hurt me to look at them.

This impression continued until the following day. The moonlight was very strong part of the night and I did not sleep well. All through the next morning I wanted to be alone with Christiana, but the chance did not seem to come. Mr. Arnoldson came downstairs and sat all day in front of the drawing-room fire, wrapped in rugs, so that the drawing-room was never empty. The two china dogs sat on the mantelpiece there and were not, as on the previous day, changed at all. Once I heard the voices of Aunt Wilcox and Christiana coming from the kitchen. They were talking about the dogs. 'It's in my room,' Christiana said. 'I've stuck it with secotine.'

I sat most of that morning in Laurence's study, reading. He went in mostly for technical books, and towards the end of the morning I got bored and asked him if he had any books of travel. He said there were a few in his bedroom. I went up to his room and there, on his chest of drawers, I found a book on Mexico. I took it downstairs and in five minutes I was reading the episode about the tomato and the Indian woman in the little cold mountain town.

In the night there had been another fall of snow, but it was a bit warmer. The sun was very brilliant on the snow, and out of Laurence's study window I could see, high up, pewits flashing like semaphores, white and dark against the very blue winter sky. I felt I had to get out.

I went out and walked across the fields, in the snow, past the brook and over towards the pond. The white of the snow was dazzling, and I felt a slightly dazed effect, the light too sharp for my eyes. Along by the brook the snow was beginning to melt a little on the branches of the alders, bringing down showers of bright ice rain. I could see everywhere that rabbits had loped about in the

early morning snow, and there were many prints of moor hens, but there was nothing that looked at all like the mark of a fox.

The snow had covered everything of the pond, and the surface was smoother than water. I stood and looked at it for a moment and then went on. A little farther on I picked up the brook again and I did not come back for half an hour.

Coming back, I saw Christiana. I could see where she had walked in the snow. She had walked round the pond and now she was about half a field away, going back towards the house. I called and she turned and waited for me, standing against the sun. She stood with arms folded, her big coat lapped heavily over her. Her face was white with the strong upward reflection of snow.

We walked on together. She walked with her arms continually folded. 'Have you seen the fox?' I said.

I know I did not expect her to answer. She did not answer. Farther on we had to cross the brook by a small wooden bridge. On the bridge I stopped her, holding her coat. I put my arms round her and held her for a moment. Holding her, I could feel, then, why she walked with her arms folded. She had something under her coat. She kissed me without speaking. All the time I could feel her holding some object under her coat, as hard as stone.

We stood there, above the sun-shining water, slightly dazzled by the world of snow, for about five minutes, and I kissed her again. She was acquiescent, but it was an acquiescence that was stronger, by a long way, than all the strange remote activity of her spirit had ever been. It was normal. I felt for the first time that she was there, very young, very sweet, very real, perhaps a little frightened. Up to that time we had said nothing at all about affection. I had not thought of it. Now I wanted her. It seemed very natural, an inevitable part of things.

'You like me, don't you?' I said. It was all I could think of saying.

'Yes,' she said.

'Very much?'

'Very much.'

She smiled very quietly. I did not know what to do except to smile back. We walked on. Out in the open snow I stopped and, before she could do or say anything, kissed her again.

'Someone will see us.'

'I don't care,' I said.

I was very happy. At that moment, out in the snow, walking away from the sun, watching our two blue shadows climbing before us up the slight slope to the house, I had no doubts about her. Half an hour before I had wanted to tell her that I knew there was no fox, that she had never been to Mexico, that all she had told me was an imposture. Now it did not seem to matter. And the voices? They did not seem to matter either. Many people hear the voices of people who are not there, who have never been there. There is nothing strange in that.

I was worried only by one thing: what she was carrying under her coat. Then, when we went in for lunch I knew, for certain, that it was the china dog. And that night I knew why it was.

Mr. Arnoldson went to bed very early that night, about half-past seven, and Aunt Wilcox went upstairs with him, to see that he was all right. Laurence had gone down to the post office and I was sitting in the drawing-room, reading the morning paper. From the dining room, suddenly, I could hear voices.

They went on for five minutes, and I could not understand it. At last I got up and opened the drawing-room door. Across the hall the dining-room door was open a little and Christiana was

sitting at the dining table, talking to a china dog.

'The fox,' she was saying, 'the fox.'

I stood looking. She was jabbering quite fast to the dog, strangely excited, her fingers tense.

'Christiana,' I said.

She did not hear me.

'Christiana.'

She got the dog by the neck and ran it across the mahogany table, towards a glass fruit dish, in crazy pursuit of something, jabbering, laughing a little, until I could see that the dog had the fox by the neck and that they were tearing each other to bits in the snow.

I saw it quite clearly for a moment, like a vision: the mahogany changed to snow, the fruit dish to fox, the china dog to a dog in reality, and in that moment, for the first time, I felt a little mad myself.

VI

I went away on the following afternoon. Laurence drove me to the station. Nothing much happened. It was snowing fast, and Christiana did not come outside to see us off. She stood at the window of the drawing-room, staring out. Except that her face was white with the reflection of the snow, she looked quite normal, quite herself. No one would have noticed anything. But as we drove away I saw her, for one second, as someone imprisoned, cut off from the world, shut away.

We had not much time for the train, and Laurence drove rather fast. 'You look a bit queer,' he said at the station. 'Are you all right?'

'Yes,' I said.

'Are you sure? Let me carry your bag. You don't look quite yourself.'

I could not speak. 'No,' I thought, 'I am not myself.'

THE SCHWABING ALP

BY RODA RODA

PROFESSOR HERMANN HENSEL is Reichs-Leader of Sculpture in the National Socialist Institute of German Culture. A man somewhat past middle years, Professor Hensel might well be the model artist of the Third Reich. Not for him the aloof attitude, the dreamy eyes, the ivory tower; he is a man of extraordinary political diligence and activity, a Nazi so ardent that one may take for granted the approval and favor of his superiors. So politically energetic, in fact, is this high priest of National Socialist sculpture that in the years since the party's rise to power he has permitted himself time for only the briefest flirtations with art. It is dubious if the visitor to the House of National Socialist German Art would find in that appalling display even the smallest statuette to prove that the rich vein of artistic inspiration in the Reichs-Leader of Sculpture had not run dry.

Yet to question Hermann Hensel's sculptural ability is blasphemy. That has been proved for all time. Here is a man who has worked so heroically in plaster that, since the year 1914, it has been necessary for him to give to the world, and to Germany in particular, no more than one work. Into this one work has been poured every ounce of Professor Hensel's astounding strength, fertility, and ingenuity. True, he has not toiled on it uninterruptedly. His labors have been divided into four periods of furious artistic energy.

The story of those four periods has not been told before, and it would give

no pleasure to Reichs-Leader Hensel to see it here recounted. The sole hope of the narrator in committing it to paper is that it may speed the day when Hermann Hensel will engage in a fifth period of labor on the great work of his life.

In Munich, in 1914, Hensel was one of the poorest and most artistic residents of the Schwabing — or Greenwich Village — section of that city. He was picturesquely Bohemian in appearance, and perhaps this fact was responsible for the hope with which certain art critics spoke of him. For, although he was known as a sculptor, if he had created anything to prove it he kept it a secret.

But in a late summer month of this year 1914, Hermann Hensel, hearing and reading of the glorious victories of the armies of Germany and Austria-Hungary, found himself pregnant with an idea. He cherished it for several days and then confided it to his friend Dr. Nusic, art editor of a Munich paper.

Hensel had decided that he would carve a medal. Modest in size — about the size of a penny, say — but mighty in conception. The medal would symbolize the unity of Germany and Austria in arms. On one side there would be a figure to represent 'Unity'; on the other, simply the year, 1914. Stark but effective. If well done, perhaps the government would purchase it for mass production.

Dr. Nusic thought the idea excellent. He was so enthusiastic that he said he

would throw all his weight behind it and secure a studio for the young man. He knew Hensel's humble circumstances. The proposed medal might be modest in size, but nevertheless its creator must have room for the free play of his inspiration.

Two days later, Hensel was delighted to receive at his boardinghouse a letter from the Mayor himself, speaking for the Council of the Royal City of Munich. The esteemed citizen and art critic Dr. Nusic, the Mayor wrote, had drawn to his attention the project of Mr. Hensel. He begged to inform Mr. Hensel of the City Council's deep admiration for his patriotic purpose and their decision, in order to help the execution thereof, to provide for Mr. Hensel's use as a studio the assembly hall of the Municipal Commercial School for Girls. Mr. Hensel could occupy the assembly hall free of charge for the duration of the summer vacation.

Hensel repaired to the school and entered the assembly hall. It startled him; he had never been inside the building before. All the chairs had been cleared out and it was as if he stood alone in a hangar calculated to accommodate a Zeppelin. The place was gigantic. He peered in awe at the huge windows, the lofty ceiling, the vast sweep of the walls.

We may imagine the young sculptor, a tiny figure, standing there lost in meditation. Undoubtedly he thought of his medal, and irresistibly there was pictured in his mind a comparison between the size of the medal and the size of the assembly-hall studio. Whatever his mental processes, the result was inevitable. Hermann Hensel was not one to resist such a challenge and such an opportunity. The flame of patriotism mounted higher in his thin breast, a flush rose to his cheeks, and his eyes swam with inspiration.

He would create as sculptor never before had created.

He composed a letter to the Mayor.

He was deeply grateful, he said, for the city's generosity. However, more was needed. He asked for unlimited credit in certain necessary materials.

The Mayor, considering this request, naturally dismissed it as a trifle. The materials for a penny-size medal would hardly bankrupt the city. Of course, he replied; Mr. Hensel could have full credit at whatever firm he selected.

Hensel plunged into his dream, and the Mayor forgot the matter.

In such curious circumstances was started and slowly moulded that colossal work of art, later to be called the Schwabing Alp, which was to experience the strangest vicissitudes that ever befell the creation of a bemused sculptor's hands. The records of the number of truckloads of plaster that were poured into its composition have been lost, and the records of the number of assistants and workmen employed by Hermann Hensel in his epochal labor. The next thing that is known positively is the scene that took place on the expiration of the summer vacation, when the students of the Municipal Commercial School for Girls returned to gather for preliminary exercises in their assembly hall.

An emergency call was put in for police, City Council, and Mayor. These dignitaries, entering the hall, beheld a horrifying spectacle.

Before them loomed the framework of a creation fit to be mentioned in the same breath with the pyramids, the colossus of Rhodes, the Eiffel Tower. It was far from completion, but the sculptor's titanic conception could be glimpsed.

On top, firmly planted in masses of plaster clearly designed to represent thunderclouds, stood the God of War, an idealized version of the Emperor, complete with Prussian moustache, eagle helmet, and lowering brow. Next to him, slightly smaller but still vast in scale, towered a figure wearing the feathered hat of an Austrian general,

unmistakably the Emperor Francis Joseph. The God of War, or Wilhelm, held outflung from one hand an enormous banner; with the other he led in chains a group of ignominious and much smaller figures, the chiefs of the Allied staffs. Around these humbled officers stood, in various attitudes of heroic scorn, defiance, and anger, such generals of the Prussian forces as Moltke, Conrad, Hindenburg, Ludendorff. Below all this, serving as the mountain's base, was a host of figures clad in the bucket helmets and field-gray uniforms of the German army.

After gathering his wits, the Mayor ordered Hermann Hensel to evacuate the assembly hall.

This was clearly ridiculous. Hensel could evacuate it easily enough; as for the Alp, the mountain might as well have come to Mahomet. Hensel invited the Mayor with all the municipal forces to evacuate the hall. The Mayor declared that it was Hensel's responsibility. A passionate argument ensued and raged over a period of several weeks. By that time various forces had rallied to Hensel's support. There were half-a-dozen patriotic societies and also the Union of German Artists. The Mayor found himself abused in the press. He was called a poltroon, a turncoat, a renegade unable to appreciate this mightiest of all memorials to the glory of German arms. Unable to withstand the storm, he gave ground; and permission was granted to Hensel to occupy the assembly hall until the expiration of the next year's summer vacation.

Work proceeded in peace, and the Schwabing Alp mounted to its full grandeur. Students gathered in the assembly hall, but solely to regard in wonder the thing that grew there.

With the new year, a new situation overtook the sculptor; the Municipal Commercial School for Girls was commandeered by a bureau of the Bavarian Army Corps. A curt letter ordered Hensel to get out with all his works

within twenty-four hours. Hensel again appealed to public opinion. The patriotic societies, the Union of German Artists, the Society for the Preservation of War Memorials, the Board of Education, the Municipal Council of the Royal City of Munich, the War Ministry, and the firm that had been supplying plaster for the Alp threw their separate interests into the fray. Hensel held his ground for the Alp. By now he would have shed blood for it. It had become his life. He was adding constantly to it in a ferment of art run riot, and new figures joined the mass each week.

He held the fortress for three years. In the early fall of 1918, a final warning arrived from army headquarters: a company of engineers had been detailed to blast the Alp out of the assembly hall.

Hensel replied with a stroke of pure genius. He presented the Alp to the Royal Family of Bavaria.

He received promptly in reply a Royal letter graciously accepting the gift and appointing him to the rank of Professor of Sculpture in the Royal Academy of Art in recognition of his great artistic and patriotic services.

The Alp rested in peace for a few weeks.

On the eighth of November, 1918, the revolution broke out. In the confusion that followed, the Schwabing Alp was for a time forgotten. But Hensel, a perceptive man, was not idle. He was as a mother with her only child. It was his career and his life; at all odds it must be protected. He was working more busily than ever, while outside the tumult raged.

The victorious republic needed room for mass meetings, and inevitably a people's commissar bethought himself of the assembly hall of the Municipal Commercial School for Girls and remembered at the same time the monstrosity that lived there, a heroic statue glorifying the old régime, clearly counter-revolutionary. The commissar summoned a

squad of the new revolutionary police, and with fire in his eye made for the hall. He entered. Once more the work of Hermann Hensel struck the onlooker dumb with amazement.

The helmets of the war lords were gone. The Prussian moustaches had lost their spiked tips. Where once, on helmets and uniforms and outflung banners, had bloomed the insignia of the Imperial armies, now the magic emblem of hammer and sickle met the eye. It was obvious even to a backward child that here were mighty sons of the soil, workers and peasants striding forward to the new day of socialism.

Hensel explained the transformation to the staggered commissar. His true sympathies, he declared, of necessity had been kept undercover. All these years, this was really what he had had in mind. His original conception could now be revealed — 'The Triumph of the Proletariat.'

The commissar was deeply affected and shook with profound emotion the hand of Comrade Hermann Hensel. The Schwabing Alp, riding higher than ever in glory, was dedicated a few days later in a beautiful ceremony with speeches and the singing of the 'Internationale.' It was dedicated by the Soviets of the city of Munich to the great and triumphant working class of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics as a small token of the esteem of the Soviet Republic of Bavaria.

But Soviet Bavaria's life was short, and the Weimar Republic swept the

field. The Whites marched into Munich. Once more avenging hands reached out for Hermann Hensel, and, incidentally, for the clearly subversive 'Triumph of the Proletariat.'

Behold: another rich change has taken place. The God of War, more lately the Conquering Worker, now stands supreme as Frau Germania, surrounded by President Ebert and the officials of his cabinet.

The events of 1933 were, of course, child's play for Hensel. Frau Germania stripped off her robes and saluted the world as Adolf Hitler — a simple matter of reduction of bulk and a small moustache. To transform the lank figure of Chancellor Brüning — himself a recent addition — into Göring was a more considerable task and one that almost broke Hensel in achieving, but it was done, and certainly no criticism would be raised by the Field Marshal if on the Alp he appeared clothed in more lissome garments of flesh. Imperial eagles, hammer and sickle, seal of the Weimar Republic — these melted magically into swastikas. The Führer led the faithful in 'The Triumph of National Socialism.'

And Hermann Hensel, whose true political sympathies, he easily explained, had all this time of necessity reposed undercover, was able in recognition of his services to refer to himself as Reichs-Leader of Sculpture Hermann Hensel — not the most important dignitary of the Third Reich, but, as creator of perhaps the greatest glory of modern German art, certainly one of the most respected.

CRISIS

BY W. H. AUDEN

*Of my sowing such straw I reap. O human folk, why set
the heart there where exclusion of partnership is necessary?
—Purgatorio, xiv, 85–87*

WHERE do they come from? Those whom we so much dread,
As on our dearest location falls the chill
Of their crooked wing, and endangers
The melting friend, the aqueduct, the flower.

Terrible Presences that the ponds reflect
Back at the famous, and, when the blond boy
Bites eagerly into the shining
Apple, emerge in their shocking fury.

And we realize the woods are deaf, and the sky
Nurses no one, and we are awake, and these
Like farmers have purpose and knowledge,
And towards us their hate is directed.

We are the barren pastures to which they bring
The resentment of outcasts; on us they work
Out their despair; they wear our weeping
As the disgraceful badge of their exile.

O we conjured them here like a lying map:
Desiring the extravagant joy of life,
We lured with a mirage of orchards,
Fat in the lazy climate of refuge.

Our money sang like streams on the aloof peaks
Of our thinking that beckoned them on like girls;
Our culture like a West of wonder
Shone a solemn promise in their faces.

We expected the beautiful or the wise,
Ready to see a charm in our childish fib,
Pleased to find nothing but stones, and
Able at once to create a garden.

But those who come are not even children with
The big indiscriminate eyes we had lost,
Occupying our narrow spaces
With their anarchist vivid abandon.

They arrive, already adroit, having learnt
Restraint at the table of a father's rage;
In a mother's distorting mirror,
They discovered the Meaning of Knowing.

These pioneers have long adapted themselves
To the night and the nightmare; they come equipped
To reply to terror with terror,
With lies to unmask the least deception.

For a future of marriage, nevertheless,
The bed is prepared; though all our whiteness shrinks
From the hairy and clumsy bridegroom,
We conceive in the shuddering instant.

For the barren must wish to bear, though the Spring
Punish; and the crooked that dreads to be straight
Cannot alter its prayer, but summons
Out of the dark a horrible rector.

O the striped and vigorous tiger can move
With style through the borough of murder; the ape
Is really at home in the parish
Of grimacing and licking; but we have

Failed as their pupils. Our tears well from a love
We have never outgrown; our cities predict
More than we hope; even our armies
Have to express our need of forgiveness.

TOWN AGAINST COUNTRY

BY WILSON FOLLETT

I

LATE one afternoon in the second week after the hurricane of September 21, 1938, a Vermont dairy farmer and his oldest boy, aged thirteen, near neighbors of mine, were putting a crosscut saw through the butt log of an uprooted roadside tamarack of notable girth. In the angle of an outcropping ledge his second son and his oldest daughter, of eleven and ten, were raking together the last coals of a three-day brush fire. All the rest of the great tree was in a neat stack of split four-foot lengths hard by, and perched on it were the three younger children, watching. The youngest, who was six, was counting the double strokes of the saw in a singsong chant; the number was well into the seventh hundred.

It was the place and hour of a funeral ceremony, though there was nothing to say so to the casual passer-by.

When the cut began to bind the saw, the farmer stopped to spread it by driving in a wedge. Before resuming he asked the seven-year-old girl to hop down, run across the road to the house, and fetch his spectacles. 'And you might try to get your mother to come over a minute — if she can find the minute.' His sawing partner said, 'Come on, Dad!' but the man continued to stand watching a side door of the house. The seven-year-old, who had gone at a leggy run with flying pigtails, reappeared walking very sedately; she was carrying his spectacle case. Her mother, after the space of untying an apron and dropping a piece

of split maple into the range, emerged behind her. By the edge of the road she overtook the child, who was pausing to let a car shoot by.

The car, however, slowed down and stopped just short of them. The woman took a tentative step toward it, but was checked by its license plate — a New York one. It was a smart coupé containing complete strangers to her — a man of forty-plus and a woman of thirty-minus, who was surveying her with a sort of cool amusement. (The man seemed to be staring at the group across the road.) The farm woman flushed and crossed in front of the car, feeling all at once hatefully stiff, dragged, and aware of her not too badly splayed old kitchen shoes.

The saw swished through the resinous wood for the last time. The cut gaped at the top, swallowing the wedge. 'Nine hundred and eighty-four!' the six-year-old shrieked; then he added, chop-fallen, 'I wanted it to get to a thousand.' With a cant hook the farmer rolled the log a half-turn, exposing the immense circle of the fresh cut. Only his wife was conscious of the rumble of low gears as the New York car got under way toward the village.

All six children and their parents were now together in an awed cluster, admiring the set of wavily concentric brown growth rings, as handsome and almost as complicated as the contour lines of the Geological Survey maps on their dining-room wall. The farmer put on his horn-

rimmed reading glasses and, using the awl on his pocket knife as a fine pointer, started counting from the heart of the tree. Every tenth number he spoke aloud, and long before he pronounced 'One hundred!' his wife had forgotten her late momentary discomfort.

'A hundred and twenty-six years old, I make it,' her husband said. 'That means it has been standing here since — let me see — since the War of 1812; would that be right, Henry?' (This to his eleven-year-old.) 'Well, it was a good-sized tree when your great-grandfather was married; we know that. I can't remember the time when anyone wanting to be directed here was told anything but "the place with the big tamarack across the road." It's a great landmark gone — a great landmark. That elm just beyond it, now: you see that it's a big tree, and yet you hardly noticed it was there before.' He sighed. 'The old place will never seem quite the same again.'

His wife, who had also been doing mental arithmetic, said: 'It was a year older than all eight of us put together. It makes you feel queer to think of that, doesn't it? — as if one of us didn't amount to very much.'

The eight-year-old, Nason, burst out: 'Say, Dad! You ought to write that in to the *Boston Globe*. This must be the oldest tree in Orange County. I bet it's the oldest anywhere — and the biggest.'

Before the older ones could fall upon him with scoffing, the father said quietly: 'Well, not quite, Nase — not quite. Some of the white pines that are down, over by the south boundary, are pretty sizable — pretty old, too, I guess; we sh'll be looking into that, come winter. As for age — well, over there on Moosilauke, up at the tree line, there are spruces not over fifteen feet high that they say were growing when Columbus discovered America — only he didn't, according to what I read here and there.'

He thought a moment. 'When Dr. French drove across this summer he

took some pictures of the redwood trees out in Humboldt County, California; he's making slides of them, and you'll see them in the high-school projector one of these days. About the best of his pictures show the butt log of a tree that fell a few years back. The largest diameter, twenty-two feet from the ground, was thirteen feet, eight inches, Nase: the width of our dining room. The whole tree measured three hundred and eleven feet tall — pretty near three times the height of the tallest timber you and I ever set eyes on. They got 95,000 board feet of lumber out of it. It would take a grove of near a hundred tamaracks like this one to equal that. The tree was just over twelve hundred years old by the rings.

'And that, Nase, was just an average healthy *young* redwood — about a third grown. One in its prime would date from before Christ, and a really old one from the time of Moses. Some of 'em measure thirty-odd feet in diameter — the width of the Grange Hall and more.'

Young Nason, when he recovered, whistled and wanted to know when his father was going to take them all to see such a tree. The dairy farmer smiled somewhat wryly at his wife and said: 'I'd give a finger, but — it's not likely to be this fall.' He sighed again. 'All of which milks no cows, I suppose.'

'And bakes no gingerbread,' his wife added, and fled guiltily into the gathering dusk.

II

At the hotel in the village three miles along — an enormous and very comfortable hotel in the manner of 1885 — the driver of the New York car amiably signed the register and settled down to kill the forty-five minutes he must wait for the dining room to open. He killed them with a portable typewriter on his knees, by rattling off some fluent paragraphs of an article based on the notes he had gathered in four counties in two days. It was to be a follow-up article

summarizing the effects of the hurricane and the measures planned for coping with them, and it would be a feature in the next Sunday issue of a great metropolitan daily. In preparation for it he had interviewed all sorts of official persons from Governor Aiken down to the harried local managers of light-and-power stations, and he meant his survey to constitute as reliable a picture of the whole situation in northern New England as it was possible to draw at that juncture. When he rejoined his wife in the lobby he was feeling uncommonly well pleased with the article, the trip, and himself.

His wife, after they had congratulated themselves on the prospect of getting 'back to civilization' the next day, asked casually: 'Why did you stop at that place a couple of miles back?'

'The place where a farmer had all his kids slaving away on that big hemlock? Plumley was the name; I noticed it on the mailbox — H. Plumley. Oh, it just crossed my mind that it mightn't do any harm to pick up one sample of what the typical small farmer is up against, just for good measure.'

'Why didn't you talk with them, then? We had the hour to use up anyway.'

'I had more stuff already than I could crowd in. And then — well, you never have much luck with such people. They're as bigoted, narrow, and ignorant a class as we have in America; their minds are sealed and riveted against everything on earth except what they've always known. Springfield and Boston are still Sodom and Gomorrah to them. It's much better, when you want anything about farms and farming, to go straight to a County Commissioner or someone like that, who sees the picture whole and has some idea of how to arrange the facts and how to talk to civilized people.'

'Talk about your farm problem! There is one, all right, out in the real farm belt, but here in the Northeast the only farm

problem is the farmer, and he is an insoluble one. We find him just as he was a hundred years ago — mean, miserly, pettifogging, suspicious, soreheaded about everything from the weather to the Government, and generally sodden with the crass stupidity that buffaloes the gods.'

He said much more, all by way of embroidering the same theme; and I, alone at a neighboring table, got the benefit. He talked infuriatingly well, but with a heat that seemed a little astounding in a man of his obviously superior general cultivation. Had he been bitten that week by some Orange County farmer's watchdog? Or had he merely been too much shone upon in early youth by that dazzling luminary of American bucolic culture, H. L. Mencken of Baltimore? We of the crossroads have learned to expect something like his attitude in the breed of tourists who toss empty beer tins from their cars into our standing hay and honk their peremptory horns in our driveways until someone comes out to assure them that, yes, this is the road to Montpelier. But here was one whose detestation of us rustics was merely, or primarily, a specific form of his concern for American civilization at large. He represented, not the worst, but something above the average of what we may reasonably hope for in the city's attitude toward the country. His was the voice of the city's intelligent criticism; and any more tolerant or sympathetic attitude would be exceptional and nonrepresentative — a minority report of slight influence.

Naturally I had an impulse to illustrate the regional barbarism that repelled him by stalking over to his table and asking him a few of the many questions that were in my mind. He was pouring his contempt on a whole class of people whom he knew but casually, as an outsider, whom he meant never to take the slightest trouble to know better, and with whom by his own profession he could not communicate to any advantage. It happened to be a class of people

that I hold in admiration and affection based on lifelong knowledge. Among them, with gratitude for the privilege, I hope to make my home for the rest of my days, after years of exile in the metropolitan centres that he identified with 'civilization.' I wanted to ask him, then, which emotion had the greater inherent probability of being well rooted in the knowable facts: his negative contempt arrived at by snap judgments or my affection grown in daily intimacy. Where, in all sobriety and detachment, would one look for bigotry, narrowness, ignorance: in a reticent people expending its whole mind and strength on realities foreign to his realities, or in a clever itinerant news-gatherer who knew all about this people without ever having sown where it had sown or reaped where it had reaped?

And the great public disaster that he had come to make vivid to a million city readers: what was it but the sum of individual disasters to this very people — the last source of information he had had even a passing impulse to tap, and had left untapped after all?

But these promptings are not obeyed, these things not said, not done. (Would it be better if they were, sometimes?) I took it all out in imagining a few of the fine things that might have been said; also in helping myself, as I passed through the lobby, to a glance at the register. The name signed was one familiar enough to me in printed by-lines. Its owner ranks high in the metropolis as an alert, trustworthy, rather sympathetic commentator on affairs outside the cities in the northeastern United States and eastern Canada.

And later that evening — for the pressure of outside hostility does at least compel us to make the most of our own compensations and resources, does promote a solidarity of our own — I dropped in to compare notes with my friends the Horace Plumleys for half an hour that somehow became an hour and a half. In the end I found myself involved — as an

intent listener only — in the so-called violin sonatas of Händel. The violinist was Kenneth Plumley, the afternoon's assistant sawyer; he has a seemingly noteworthy flair for mathematics and the mathematician's predilection for stringed instruments. The stand of pine that was laid waste in September was to have squared his first two years at M. I. T.; its loss, I fancy, had something to do with the added lines in Mary Plumley's lovely, tired face. Some of them smoothed out while she was playing for her son on a piano beginning to go tinny with age and use, but always kept (for, in town or country, your fiddler has an Ear) impeccably in tune. Could the D major sonata ever have justified its existence more perfectly than by the momentary removal of such lines from such a face?

This was doubtless a bucolic notion of the uses of art, beneath the contempt of any serious aesthetician and possible only to so backward and outmoded a culture as ours; but at the moment I could not seem to care much. Even now I am not quite persuaded that G. F. Händel himself would have found that form of tribute so obnoxiously banal — especially if it were to come to his attention that in Vermont his music is very creditably played by the only symphony orchestra in the world that has ever been completely supported by a rustic population.

III

The country dweller encounters in a year a good many such samples of the city's attitude toward him as this chance one I had just collected. But no one of us has ever yet collected so many such indices as to become at all reconciled to them, or to the deep and jagged social fissure to which they point.

We happen to love, not only our region, but our country — the whole because it includes the part, the part for being included in the whole. Thinking of ourselves as equal participators in

an American unity, we are appreciably damaged in our self-respect whenever we find the urban majority surveying us as behind an impenetrable barricade of misunderstanding and class antagonism. We remember that we, next to the Indians, are the oldest inhabitants, and this circumstance lends a further irony to our being looked upon pretty much as the newest immigrant was by many a generation ago — that is, as the hopelessly unassimilable element in the population.

We cannot dismiss these unhappy encounters from our minds. We cannot shrug them off as America at large shrugs off the misconceptions, grotesque or funny, of the visiting foreigner who inspects us for six weeks, sees what he is looking for, and goes home to record his preconceptions as brilliant discoveries. The city is too much with us for that. It is, in fact, omnipresent in various forms — tourists, 'summer people,' summer camps, winter-sports enthusiasts, would-be purchasers-for-a-song of our cherished heirlooms, impersonal institutions such as the mail-order house. The city person comes into our homes in our magazines as the author of soft-boiled stories in which our quaint simplicity defeats the city slicker or of hard-boiled stories in which the rural neurotic murders the wife of his bosom with an axe. The city person buttonholes us in mail-order advertising copy that means to be deft flattery and is nine-tenths clumsy patronage. He embodies the accepted delusions about us in cartoons, editorials, movies, sometimes in federal legislation. Obviously we cannot get away from him anything like so easily as he can get away from us; we cannot be near him without sensing his attitude; and we cannot sense his attitude without being forced into an unnaturally self-conscious, quasi-defensive counter-attitude — one that may express itself in any guise from sheepish inarticulacy or evasiveness to surly, truculent manners and the keeping of vicious watchdogs.

You can scarcely expect any people to

be quite comfortable or quite themselves under the supercilious regard of strangers who think of them solely as a race of barbarians infesting an incomparable region to the loveliness of which they were born mole-blind; speaking (through the nose) a gross dialect of English; smelling perpetually of stable and sty; going to bed, for some insane reason, about when brighter folk are beginning really to wake up; ruining their digestions, teeth, and tempers by an appalling diet (as cold pie for breakfast); regarding every innocent enjoyment as wicked; sneering coarsely at all taste and all urbanity; sweating their children without pity from the moment they can toddle until they finally run away to the city to be barbers; willing to sell their souls any day for an extra quarter — unless they think they can get twenty-six cents by holding out.

On the way from my friends' house to my own that night some of these reflections, with others old and new, were playing themselves over in my head in the fashion of a Händel theme with variations; and for the hundredth time they arranged themselves around the central and afflicting paradox of town versus country in the America of these days. It is a paradox that has beset me for most of my life thus far; I have found it harrowing to contemplate from either side, though more so from the rural side than from the urban; and I have little hope of living to see the end of it, though I know it must some day end, as all paradoxes and problems do. The conundrum is simply this: that the more rapidly the present physical urbanization of the country proceeds, the more unbridgeable grows the moral chasm between country dweller and townsman. The two share constantly more of the details and apparatus of living, constantly less in point of view and underlying purpose.

Why? How can it be? What, in logic and common sense, can reconcile the undoubted citification of our hamlets with

their increasing spiritual alienation from the towns? If both tendencies are truly going on at once — and there is no country person but vividly experiences both of them all the time — the explanation can only be this: that the country, however fast and steadily it broadens toward the city, cannot do so half so fast as the city narrows into itself.

And that is assuredly the fact. In this century we have reared our first great mass of Americans who are *urban and nothing else*. Multitudes are now born to almost complete independence, and hence oblivion, of night and day, winter and summer, storm and calm, rainfall and drought, seedtime and harvest. They have no vivid experience of the ways in which all civilized existence, even theirs, is dependent upon exacting work done by someone, somewhere, on raw materials with hand and brain working together. If they think casually now and then of where their food comes from, their clothing, their fuel, the paper in their books and journals, it is second nature to them to conjure up polished machines wondrously whirling under the supervision of toil-exempt experts. Because all that they eat, wear, use, and amuse themselves withal can be replaced almost instantly if they have the price, everything that they know of foresight and cunning is concentrated on the ways and means of having the price. They enjoy a conviction of living at the centre of things, of being the privileged beneficiaries of man's conquest, his virtual abolition, of nature by technology. And whatever life is unlike theirs they conceive as going on in outer Bceotian wastes where benighted and clodlike folk are clinging to mediæval ways and fighting off the progress that would liberate them.

The times have bred a race in part contemptuous, but in greater part oblivious, of nearly everything that we country people live by and for — a race incapable of understanding us and of even wanting to get itself understood by us.

The phenomenon is a relatively new one. When America was 90 per cent agrarian the remaining 10 per cent understood very well that it was the tail and not the dog. In the long period of the national letters from Cooper to Mark Twain, a writer who did not have a pretty complete and sympathetic knowledge of farm, forest, and forge could scarcely have thought of himself as a whole man. Holmes, in his day a very definition of urbanity at its American best, expressed himself instinctively in such metaphors as his famous 'tire of all creation straightened out for a crowbar.' When city persons went into the country they expected to learn at least as much as they taught. It is only within recent decades that the city man's interests have become so shrunken as to preclude all open-minded curiosity about those whom he is now pleased to call the yokelry.

The phenomenon is new; and to some of us it appears to be as dangerous and disruptive as it is new. The clash is one of philosophies in the broadest sense. In any long view it far transcends, say, the topical misunderstanding known as 'the class war.' It is, indeed, a clash of the very sort that could but eventuate in civil war if the antagonists happened to be solidly aligned across a sectional boundary instead of being inextricably intermingled at every level by a great cityward flow of rural population and a smaller amount of migration from the large centres farmward. Seldom in history can two populations have interpenetrated each other so freely while their two cultures remained so non-interpenetrating. The breach is portentous enough to justify a latter-day novelist-historian in calling our urban and our rural folk what Disraeli, a century ago, called England's rich and her poor: the Two Nations.

IV

Every attempt I have ever made to dig down to the taproot of the misunderstanding between townsman and rustic

has brought me inexorably against that all-inclusive phenomenon, Time. These two are unintelligible to each other on the basic question of what Time — that is to say, life — is for. One's use of the calendar is the other's waste of days. One's play would be the other's work, and dismayingly hard and thankless work. One's meat is, temporally speaking, the other's poison. What stands between them is twenty-four hours a day — every day.

We find the disparity in connection with the forms (or illusions) of pressure denoted by hurry — hurry being by general consent the characteristic disease of life in the modern city and the great cause of its neuroses. The city hurries by the single motion, the minute, the hour, the day; but you will never get it out of the small villager's head — which is often not so simple a head as it is called — that by the year, the decade, and the lifetime the city is going in circles, like a kitten making itself dizzy by chasing its tail.

The countryman himself is likely to give you a feeling of godlike leisure in the smaller units of time. He will lean on the fence and talk with you; he works at what seems a tortoise's pace to the city fellow who, for the fun of it, offers to pace him for a morning (and is stopped short before noon by a fine new set of blisters); and yet at the end of a year you perceive that he has somehow got through an incredible amount of fearfully variegated work, with everything snugly notched into its appointed time. One of his small secrets is that he has long ago been instructed by his own blisters to work at the tempo he can keep up by the year until the years have made a lifetime. A greater secret is that he gets his sustenance as he goes along, out of the thing he is doing and out of his personal way of doing it. He is not straining forward toward some dreamed-of interval of leisure and diversion to be earned by doing things faster than he can savor.

A Yankee poet, a singer too little sung

who amuses himself by camping for ten days of every year in an old-fashioned Manhattan hotel and making small clinical studies of the metropolis, put in a day riding on buses and then quizzed a starter about the official schedule between two points. 'Our allowance is forty-three minutes, sir.' 'And your drivers make it how often?' 'Oh, pretty often, sir — after midnight and before eight in the morning.' My friend's timed passages had varied from fifty-seven minutes to an hour and twenty-five. 'And that,' says my poet friend, 'is the low-down about the efficiency of New York life, business, and transit, and the reason why we hicks can never get mixed up in it without going mad. Everyone is doing everything by a purely fictitious mathematics: two and two make seven, thirteen from twenty leaves twenty-five. The people all have twice the engagements for every hour that it is humanly possible to meet; and an unanswerable reason for keeping you waiting an hour and a half is supposed to be exactly as good as seeing you on the dot. If one of us ran his affairs the way they run theirs, he'd be on the town in three months.'

That is a picture of the city man in his own bailiwick. Behold him in ours: —

I am swinging along the road toward the village. A new pearl-gray sedan overtakes me, complete with elderly city business executive and his youngish wife. He lowers a window to bark: 'Hey, how do I get to Colburn's?' I start describing by the one unmistakable landmark the extremely obscure left turn he must make after a specified distance. He says: 'Never mind all that. I happen to be in a hurry.' I say: 'Then I am afraid you will be a long time arriving. Well — your first left, then your first right, and in a third of a mile you're there.' The million-dollar executive nods, says, 'Now we're getting somewhere!' and leaves me in an odor of scuffed rubber. And I know very well what will occur. He will pass the blind turn and take the very conspicuous left turn a furlong beyond

it. After miles of watching for that first right he will be at the lonely dead end of a grassy cart path up in the foothills. He will drop down half a mile in reverse, looking for a place where a pearl-gray sedan can be turned around, and there will be incidental observations on these dumb natives that can't answer a plain question without mixing you up in a lot of maundering details about red barns with cupolas on them. And to this man in his legions it really seems that, tearing along mischosen roads and getting more lost with every turn of his wheels, he is Doing Something — 'getting somewhere.' To stand still for forty seconds and put his mind on the detail that would save him an hour is his idea of wasting time.

That is the sort of thing the country person can never see the sense of. To him it is sheer madness to live as if you were forever in the throes of missing a train — especially an imaginary train that never ran — or as if you hated what you are doing and were holding out only to get rid of it and on to the next thing that you will hate. And yet this country person keeps his engagements on time. He meets his appointments with the seasons. Every October his cellar is full of food, his shed stacked with dry wood for the winter at hand and green wood for the winter following, his loft supplied out of his own woodland with hard and soft lumber for repairs. Year by year he builds up the productivity of his land, the quality of his herd, the efficiency of his equipment. Most of his individual acts are not only performances, but also promises: they would be unintelligible except in the light of events months or years ahead, as when in his prime he sets out a pine plantation that will perhaps educate his grandchildren.

A year, the city hustler's æon, is the very smallest unit of time that can mean anything in the rural scheme of continuity. It is a commonplace to a good farmer to refuse, say, an advantageous sale of trees to the telephone company

(though he is hard pressed for cash) because in eight years or ten one of his barns will need rebuilding above the plates, and in his mind he has those trees earmarked for the rafters. All of the present has so much meaning to him because so much of the future is in it.

His clock being the sun's cycle, with the seasons for its ticks, it is interesting to watch the quality of his smile at summer time, daylight-saving time — 'fast' time, he calls it. Partly this is a Joshua's attempt to dictate to nature — which also smiles — and partly a city man's device for tricking himself into doing for his own good what farm and village have always done. The practical effect is that village establishments mostly open by 'fast' time and close by standard; for mere legislation can no more subvert a farmer's daily program than it can a cow's, and no one can tell *him* that his shopping must be done by a clock set ahead. It is going to be interesting, by the way, to see the new Wages and Hours provisions cope with this sociological quirk as it affects the unreckoned, unpaid overtime of village clerks who serve the farmer.

The countryman has within himself, then, the city person's very conviction of residing at the centre of things and not on the negligible fringe. But he has this conviction with a deeper calm and without contempt. Living by the deliberate pulsations of the universe, he is certainly a little out of rapport with the world of, say, publishing, in which nine tenths of the three-months-old books are as dead as if they had never been born; or with the world of fashions in dress, which in this winter of 1938-1939 is describing something or other as 'the greatest fashion news since the dirndl' — of last spring, if you please, and now long extinct. But he has the compensatory feeling that a popular theologian once embodied in the phrase 'in tune with the infinite,' and he knows as well as Wordsworth ever did how a man's days can be bound each to each by natural piety.

V

And how, in the end, is a unity to be brought out of this disparity? I have been asked this question a good many times, but I have never had the temerity to say more than 'You tell me.'

The city man has, of course, an answer satisfactory to himself. He does not admit the existence of two irreconcilable cultures. To him it is a simple question of a culture confronting a barbarism, and he thinks it inevitable that the barbarism shall gradually be absorbed into the culture. He puts his trust in such factors as our improved means of communication (which in many respects notoriously fail to improve communication itself), the growing centralization and standardization of the rural school system, the increasing part played by science and mechanization in agriculture, the future of 'chemical farming,' the reforestation of poor or marginal farmlands, the combination of family farms into efficient corporative units, the colonization of rural regions by city folk seeking summer homes or going in for subsistence farming, and so on — in short, the aforementioned gradual urbanization of the countryside.

All of which is reckoning without the innate character and tenacity of the people so lightly disposed of. There are still some twenty million Americans to whom the one-family farm has never become a business measured by its profits. It is the passionately preferred setting of all that they mean by the good life, and no more profit has ever been necessary than the invisible margin required to carry it on. Many of this people's children, to be sure, adopt other ways of living; if they did not, the farms would soon be split up into parcels too tiny for subsistence. But the parental idea is shared by enough of the children to perpetuate the status quo and its social problem for at least another generation. The 4-H Clubs flourish increasingly, and so do many looser organizations of rural

youth for the intensive study of farm problems and the practice of farm activities; such vigorous junior groups are, at the very least that can be said, a rural equivalent of the town's Boy Scout troop. Many of these younger ones will in their turn marry early and bring up children likely to share the same unyielding philosophy. No breed in the temperate zone can be more nearly impossible to standardize than that which has created the household farm and been created by it.

There are those who expect to see the replenishment of our civilization, the evolution of a new and more homogeneous American culture, through the gradual emergence of a Farmer-Labor party on a scale to dominate our political life and presently to re-create our social. I notice, however, that the proponents of this hope are chiefly worried about enlisting the farmer's vote in the real or fancied interest of labor rather than of the farmer himself. Social domination is the last thing he is interested in, anyway. What he wants is to let live and be let live.

As for the increasing suburbanization of rural regions, — which is bound to go on while the feasible commuting radius continues to lengthen, — what it accomplishes is not rapprochement, but simple displacement. Where the tendency has gone the farthest, as along a great part of the New England seaboard, what we face is a reduction of the American countryside to a dismal counterpart of the English, only with the English yeoman farmer wiped out. All the more desirable land has gone into the country estates and playgrounds of city folk, and the natives who have not escaped to the towns have become apathetically resigned to impoverished dependence and servility — or, what is quite as vicious, to profiteering on visitors for four months of the year and frowsting for eight. What has happened is just a physical extension of the city. By it the urban beneficiary and his young gain so much air, light, and

elbowroom; by it the countryside loses so much independence, productiveness, and self-respect. There is no reconciliation or compromise of interests: there is mere appropriation. To anyone who happens to see in it the appropriation of the more by the less important, such regions are a heart-rending spectacle.

VI

In the course of some village errands that I had to do after writing thus much I ran into Mary Plumley. She looked, somehow, inexplicably keen and elastic as compared with a few weeks back, and I remarked that she gave the appearance of having just come into a fortune. She said: 'I have. Horace pitched into the sugar bush this morning.'

The Plumleys had had a sugar orchard of some nine hundred prime trees. In an average year these maples were good for sixty-odd cents of profit apiece, and that is a lot of supplementary income — more than the entire net income of many a farm family that never dreamed of pitying itself. The hurricane felled over four hundred, incidentally crushing the sap house flat and wrecking the evaporator; and naturally the four hundred made the surviving five hundred impossible to get at. Horace, in the prolonged apathetic daze that is always the most appalling consequence of widespread disaster, kept saying such things as that he was done, through, finished, licked. He could never get enough out of those maples to square a fifth of the cost of handling them. They could rot into the ground for all he should ever be able to do about it. He would never touch sugar again, and he did not know how they were ever going to get through another year except by selling the place to summer people who had been pestering him about it.

And now Horace had tackled the sugar bush. He will clean up two or three trees at a time, as, with Kenneth or without,

he can work them in. Whenever he can scrape together the cash he will hire extra labor, two or three days or a week of it at a time. He hopes to have the town tractor now and then to help him with the upheaved stumps. Soon he will be skidding logs, hauling cordwood, burning brush. By the first sap run he may be able to get at nearly half his remaining trees. When the frost is out he will trim around the young shoots that, a long generation hence, will replace his losses. A year from this spring he will probably have regained the use of all his standing trees.

When I asked his wife what had suddenly brought this grand thing to pass she said: 'Why, it was Henry's doing as much as anything. Henry' — the eleven-year-old — 'kept pestering his father. He wouldn't let up on him for a day or a meal. He would say: "What fun is this place going to be without a sugar bush on it? D'you think when I grow up I'm going to fool around with a place that hasn't got a sugar bush?" He was pretty impudent about it at times — and pretty funny.' She added: 'Of course, Horace would have got around to it anyway, sooner or later.' And that was strictly true. When your Yankee farmer begins to vent himself in chronic bitter talk about all the reasons why nothing can possibly be done, he is not far from the moment of taking hold as if those reasons did not exist.

So, one of these springs when I am a doddering ancient (I come of long-lived folk) and Horace and Mary Plumley are getting pretty well along themselves (they are in their middle thirties) and Henry is a man with sons perhaps a few years older than he and Kenneth are now, there will again be better than nine hundred trees dripping sap into Plumley buckets. And there will have been kept alive, if only in that one small nucleus, a something not material that I, for one, had just as soon never see my country trying to get along without.

TEXAS BANKS ITS OIL

BY GERALD DONOGHUE

I

IN the early days of the Breckenridge oil field in Central Texas, where, before oil, grass for cattle meant wealth, John Warren, an oilman, stood behind a farmer he knew in a line before a bank teller's window.

'How are the oil companies treating you?' Mr. Warren asked.

'Not a damn bit good,' snorted the farmer, fingering a check stuck in the front pocket of his dirty blue overalls. He pulled out the check. It was for \$37,500 — royalties for fifteen days.

'Seems to me they treat you pretty good,' said Mr. Warren.

'Oh, the check's all right,' said the farmer, 'but them damn-fool oilmen went and ruined all my grass.'

To-day the oil business in Texas has been tamed. Oil fields dot 100 out of the state's 254 counties, yet this giant industry has come to the same turn in the road which another Texas titan, the cattle business, took several decades ago when millions of acres of ranges were fenced and the cattle business changed from a careless, wasteful living off the land to a canny, ordered proceeding. The turn in economy for the oil industry points down the broad, sensible path of proration. Texas is banking its oil.

Supervision by strict law has curbed the old-time boom when a new field is found. The quiet business men, backbone of the industry for thirty-five years, have prevailed over the colorful, though not forgotten, pioneer characters who brought in the gushers of the fabulous

days of Spindletop, Sour Lake, and other great discovery fields.

A comparatively small number of the pioneers made great fortunes out of their strikes. Many sank their first, lush profits back into the ground in dry holes. Some great fortunes which were piled up in the days of the unrestricted gushers have been guarded well and even increased by wise investment over the past thirty-five years. But more fortunes have been thrown away in oil than ever have been secured. Apart from the great good that the industry has done in paying salaries to tens of thousands of persons, and the correlated benefits derived from any great industry, more cash has been put into the oil business than has ever been taken out. But where hundreds of large fortunes have been lost, thousands of small farmers and landowners have been settled on Easy Street through royalties.

Small towns have burgeoned into great cities through infusions of oil money; clean, modern small cities have been built where before was bald prairie land. Texas has a fine system of state highways. Modern brick schools with lighted athletic fields, satin-costumed 'pep' squads and drum-and-bugle corps, with a regular city-school education thrown in, are offered to the youth of most of its towns. The majority of these benefits have come from payment of heavy taxes by the industry.

At a time when oil was still a rarity, a sticky fluid good only for coal-oil lamps, the Texas legislature, at a meeting in

1876, set aside one million acres of land for the University of Texas. The first grant specified that the land should be carved from East Texas. But this was rich farm land, and the move was stopped. When the grant officially was made in 1885, a small empire carved out of the heart of Central and West Texas lands was conveyed to the University. It may have been that the legislature felt a twinge of conscience for having let the grant be shunted away from East Texas; it may have been that the horizons in the central part of the state seemed limitless. At all events the legislature raised the grant from one million to two million acres and chose it from the best free land available at that time. Taking Midland as a centre, a fan spreading seventy-five miles over Crockett, Reagan, Pecos, Crane, Ector, Winkler, Ward, and Andrews counties covers the University holdings. The grazing rights in this semi-arid but valuable ranch land to-day yield \$250,000 a year, but in oil the University has a nest egg of some \$28,000,000.

Only the interest on the funds derived from oil royalties and oil bonuses may be used by the University. The principal, by state law, is safely removed from any possible political raids. The University maintains its own geological and research offices at Midland, and its affairs are managed by a board of regents of nine, headed by J. R. Parten, Houston oilman.

Any revenue from sale of lands or sale of oil from University lands must go into the general fund. While this puts the University somewhat in the position of being a rich ward of the state with a comparatively small spending allowance, it safeguards the institution's heritage. The principal of the University funds, under state law, may be invested only in United States bonds or Texas municipal or county bonds. The potential value of the two million acres has been estimated at \$50,000,000. The interest of the University's oil fortune runs about \$900,000 a year, which, with the quarter million

from the grazing leases, makes a tidy \$1,150,000 yearly income.

This income has largely been used to build a fine physical plant to replace the decrepit frame buildings which were eyesores on the campus for many years. When the building program is completed, it is the plan of the board of regents to establish scholarships and to use the income for advancing the scholastic standing of the University.

II

A recent estimate of the reserves of oil in the ground in the United States was 14,015,092,297 barrels, of which Texas is credited with having over 7,234,124,421 barrels, or some 53 per cent. The total production of crude oil in 1938 for the world was 1,983,090,000 barrels, of which the United States produced 1,200,883,000, Texas alone, under proration, yielding 470,760,325. This gives the state better than 23½ per cent of the world's oil production and more than 39 per cent of the production in the United States. In one day, with its wells flowing to capacity, it could produce enough oil to last the United States for several years.

There are to-day more than 500 oil fields in Texas. It is impossible to give an arbitrary figure because new fields are being discovered continually. There are 84,000 oil wells on these fields; a new producing well is brought in somewhere in the state every fifty minutes.

The East Texas field, the greatest proved oil area in the history of the world, has 27,000 wells rising like a forest over 130,000 acres. These wells, if turned wide open, could produce 15,000,000,000 barrels of oil *in one hour* — enough to supply the entire petroleum needs of the United States for more than a week. A 24-hour production from this field would supply the nation for 240 days.

The Gulf Coast, from the eastern tip near Orange to Brownsville, is spotted with oil fields, with varying allowables. Houston is ringed with them. The major

Conroe field is forty miles to the north-east, and a score of comparatively small but rich ones are close by. Corpus Christi is the boom centre of an area spotted with fields developing so fast that any estimates are quickly outdated.

The Wichita Falls territory found new life in the KMA field. The Breckenridge field, like some of those around San Antonio such as Luling and Darst Creek, is an old standby which plays a heavy part in the daily production of the state. Yates Field, in West Texas, is rated as one of the major fields in the state, with a potential of 8,000,000 barrels a day. Here also production is cheap, as the wells are shallow. One recent test on a well showed that it has an estimated potential of 100,000 per day — the same as when it was brought in several years ago.

III

Oil, on a commercial scale, is about fifty years old in Texas. In 1885 there was some shallow production in Nacogdoches; two years later, during drilling for water in Corsicana, oil in paying quantities was found. J. S. Cullinan, a Pennsylvania oilman, came to Corsicana, looked over the prospects, then returned East to find capitalists to back his development of the field. He built a refinery in Corsicana and marketed the products — mostly kerosene and fuel oil.

The first big strike for Texas came in January 1901. Captain A. F. Lucas, an Austrian engineer, brought in the first well at Spindletop, just outside of Beaumont. The well blew out and ran wild for several days, roaring skyward with an estimated 70,000 barrels a day. The black crude plastered the countryside, drenched the wildly excited drillers and spectators, ran off into gullies and ditches. Then the oil caught fire and the area was a mass of flame and smoke for days until the overflow burned out and the well was brought under control.

The news spread over the nation that Spindletop was a forest of gushers —

easy money. A swarm of people from all over the country descended on Beaumont, with its streets of unfathomable mud and its plague of mosquitoes. Oil companies blossomed and showered stock on the unsuspecting heads of the greenhorns and suckers who thought the wells would flow forever. There was a sad awakening a few months later after oil had been refused at three cents a barrel. The natural pressure of the wells was expended when the lavish flow stopped. Most stockholders of the hundred odd companies formed in the frenzy of the first rush at Spindletop never got the return of a dollar on their investments. Only three or four of these companies have survived.

But the bursting of Spindletop's first bubble only served to clear away the chaff of the drifters and left the field clear for the real oilmen. Fightin' Joe Cullinan, as he was known to the roustabouts and roughnecks in the field, came down from Corsicana. T. J. Donoghue, another oilman from the grandfather of all oil states, Pennsylvania, joined with Mr. Cullinan, and the Texas Company was formed. Walter B. Sharp drilled nothing but a dry hole at Spindletop, a field of gushers, yet went on to Sour Lake later and found production which laid a foundation for a substantial fortune. Howard Hughes, father of the round-the-world flier and brother of Rupert Hughes, the novelist, was one of the outstanding figures of those days. Hughes invented the rotary drilling bit, which speeded up the entire oil industry and made millions for him. William S. Farish, now chairman of the board of the Standard Oil of New Jersey, was a young lawyer from Mississippi who got a start in the oil business at Spindletop.

The development of the automobile brought a steady and ever-increasing demand for petroleum. At last oil was good for something besides lighting the lamps of the nation.

Wildcatters, spurred on by this new demand, drove their drilling bits into the

swamps of the Gulf Coast and the soft loam of plantation land, split the hard-baked prairie under the blasting Texas sun, and drove the bits to pay sand through howling northers in the Panhandle. Sour Lake, Humble, Blue Ridge, and others were brought in down in South Texas. To the north, Tom Waggoner was the driving force bringing in another ocean of oil. Waggoner, a wealthy cattleman, made many millions in oil, but he would not let gas be piped to his fireplace — he wanted a place to spit. The late T. P. Lee, once a driller drawing a daily wage at Spindletop, was rated as a rich man in Houston, a city where ordinary millionaires are regarded as plain 'home folks.'

Following the early discovery fields, there was a steady succession of oil strikes which daubed almost every section of the state with oil. The Breckenridge field was discovered in North Texas in 1916. The Ranger field, just to the south of Breckenridge, proved a rich one. Then came the Borger field, famed because it was one of the toughest of all oil-boom towns, a boom town that defied all law and order until in 1927 the Governor sent in the National Guard.

These fields boomed before proration. Some of the farmers and landowners were almost smothered with royalties; and some of them didn't know what to do with their money.

Away over in a field near the unpainted house, about a quarter of a mile from where the men were dancing around the new oil well, the tall farmer, leather-brown, went steadily ahead with his ploughing. He was still striding along in the fresh black furrow behind the plough when one of the drillers and two reporters from the Houston papers caught up with him to tell him oil had been brought in on his land.

'What's the first thing you plan to do with all this money you'll be getting?' one of the reporters asked.

The farmer hesitated a moment. He looked across the field to the house,

where a thin blue wisp of smoke rose in the hot Texas air.

'Well, right off I don't know,' the farmer answered. 'Ma's been needing a cookstove mighty bad.'

Hundreds of other small farmers and ranchers reacted in the same way. The thousands of dollars in oil royalties pouring in were unreal to them — but their land was real, something to trust in, a sure living if properly cared for. One of the largest gushers in the history of Texas came in on a small truck farm near Orange in 1922. The old farmer carefully kept the drillers away from his truck patch and, while the great well was swamping him with cash, daily loaded up his wagon with vegetables and sold them from door to door in Orange.

A county editor who had been plugging away on a large Houston newspaper for some sixteen years bought six acres of land in South Houston, a suburb of small homes. Carefully, pridefully, he set out several fine pecan trees which soon took root and blossomed in the rich soil. But the soil was richer than the county editor thought. The South Houston oil field was brought in; and shortly three oil wells were flowing on his six acres. That was several years ago, and the income from his little property probably is sufficient to support him for the rest of his life in a style to which he was not accustomed before his strike. But he sits at his desk, handling news items from his county correspondents and writing stories for the paper. 'Oil wells have gone dry,' he says. 'I've got a job here.'

This same county editor is a product of East Texas, and while negotiations with a large oil company were going on for his land he showed typical East Texas shrewdness in trading. Some say it is not shrewdness — just plain old East Texas slowness. The agent for the oil company made the editor an offer, the same per acre that he had made to other residents in the South Houston field. The editor said he would think it over. This took several days. In the

meantime the lease man thought it looked like a holdout. He came back with a higher offer. The editor had to begin all over and think out the new proposition. This seesaw went on for several weeks, with the oil company constantly increasing the ante. Finally the company gave him time to make up his mind and he accepted the offer — far higher than any his neighbors received.

In general, East Texas folk continually amazed the oilmen, who were used to the wild antics of the new-rich in other fields. After a preliminary, but short-lived, spree of buying clothes for the family and perhaps a new Ford, the average East Texas farmer salted his lease money and royalties away in the bank just as he salted away his hams and bacon in the smokehouse.

Millions of dollars in cash swamped the small East Texas banks, which, glutted with this money, were at first at a loss to invest it. Much of the cash was sent to banks in Dallas and other large cities. East Texas bankers had been timid about lending the money out to oil operators for further oil development. However, the big city banks soon found that legitimate oil operators furnished a good outlet, that they were good risks. Gradually the smaller banks loosened their purse strings, and now, instead of having practically no chance to borrow on future oil prospects, the independent operator finds banks eager to make loans to responsible operators.

IV

Proration was not a natural development in Texas; the conservation was fought bitterly by the independent producers and small landowners. Proration still is a fighting word in some small communities, because under it the average well is restricted to twenty barrels a day. But the legislature as far back as 1899 saw the need of conservation of the state's new wealth, and passed an act providing for the plugging of abandoned

wells, casing off of water, and prevention of reckless burning of gas. Since that time many additions have been made to the statutory law on proration. The act of 1917 was the first to give the state railroad commission powers of regulation. It was a fight that started with hundreds of leaders, with what might be called the stable element of the oil industry. And the fight is still going on, just as does any fight for law and order.

But, partly because of the tremendous waste through unnecessary drilling in the East Texas field, public opinion is changing in favor of proration. In the opinion of competent oilmen, more than 13,000 of the field's 27,000 wells were drilled uselessly; the same recovery of oil could have been had without them. In short, more than \$150,000,000 was thrown away in the mad grab to clean out the field.

East Texans are regarded — and rightly so from a look at the record — as among the most rugged of rugged individualists. When oil began spouting on their scrubby, hilly farms, they saw no reason why the state should say just how much they could produce a day. It took the National Guard more than a month to convince the East Texans that the law was the law, and since then constant supervision by the railroad commission has been necessary to check the running of 'hot oil.' Production of this illegal oil, over the allowable quota, has never been completely stopped.

Despite the vigilance of the inspectors of the railroad commission, 'hot oil' trucks roar nightly over the highways to Louisiana and Oklahoma. Books have been falsified and illegal oil routed through 'by-passes' from the wells to hidden tanks or into trucks. Bootleg gasoline is as common, and as hard to trace, in Texas as moonshine in the Kentucky mountains.

There is still a disgruntled minority who claim that proration, despite state law and the federal Connally Act which forbids interstate transportation of il-

legal oil, is a device engineered by the major oil companies to rob the 'little man' of his chance to cash in quickly on his oil holdings. But the majority of the six million citizens of Texas now side with the petroleum experts and are content to have supervision of the state's rich deposits.

What proration means to a family which has a 100-barrel per day production on its hands is this: instead of flowing for an estimated three years unrestricted, without being pumped, the wells producing the 100 barrels will flow from ten to fifteen years, depending on the quality of the well. The usual royalty on leased land is one eighth of production, or $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. That means that the family will receive a steady income of about \$13 to \$15 a day for ten to fifteen years instead of three years. Although most wells can be pumped after the natural pressure stops, the cost of production rises, and usually the pool has been exhausted.

The old-timers know how important conservation is to the oil industry. They have nightmare memories of markets which flattened the boom days. Oil at Spindletop went begging for three cents a barrel in the latter part of 1901 and in 1902. The ditches of the countryside were flooded with dangerous streams of black crude because there was no adequate storage. Some Beaumont residents, penny-wise, with an eye to the future market, dipped the oil from the ditches in buckets and stored it in their barns and back yards. Sour Lake was a dismal city of discouraged boomers on the day in 1903 when 100,000 barrels of oil sold for a flat \$1000 — one cent a barrel. The same oil at market prices to-day would sell for more than one dollar a barrel.

The independent producer has benefited by proration and the general advance of the oil industry. Years ago the chief difficulty of the independent oilman was to get enough money to drill a well. Development to-day is on such a

sound, scientific, and businesslike basis that many banks are eager to lend money to responsible operators with good oil prospects. It was not many years ago that oil wells were drilled on hunches, on the appearance of seepages or other surface indications. To-day a good deal of the gambling has been eliminated from the old wildcatting system. Development is based on geology and geophysics. The seismograph is the most successful instrument for finding underground structures. The torsion balance has discovered some fields, and the magnetometer has helped in spotting others. These efficient methods of discovery hastened proration to Texas oil fields. By the old hit-or-miss system, the usual result was that two rich oil fields were seldom booming at the same time, and in the long run the market had some sort of stability. With present-day methods, vast reserves could be tapped with little wasteful prospecting by the larger companies.

While geologists set the figure for the East Texas field at a tremendous total, petroleum engineers think that a million and a half barrels a day is the limit that the field could produce for any length of time before the pressure would be reduced to a point where the wells would stop flowing and have to be pumped.

In the 'good old days,' those top figures would probably have been the goal of the bonanza boys, who would have drained the state of its greatest natural resource. But with the present facilities for production, were the restrictions discarded, every producer would have to protect himself by drilling as many wells as possible to keep the other fellow from draining away the oil from under his lease; every landowner would insist on the greatest possible production to boost his royalties. A great industry would be wrecked. Oil would not be worth its transportation costs; tens of thousands of people would be thrown out of work; and the state would lose the bulk of the tremendous

taxes the industry pays yearly to its treasury.

V

There are two kinds of oil boom that pay off in big money — one where a new field is found, the other where a new field is indicated by a few wells and leases go sky-high.

Kilgore is the heart of the East Texas field, with 700 producing oil wells inside the city limits. Out of the dusty cocoon of a sleepy village, Kilgore burst forth as a modern city, a city built mostly by 'boomers.' Within seventy-two hours after the first well was brought in, the town's first daily newspaper, the *Kilgore Daily News*, was selling on the streets. A six-story hotel, complete with chromium gadgets, rose on the spot where the town's drugstore had languished, marooned in a sea of red mud. It is typical of the town that the only vacant store space in the hotel is designed for a drugstore on the spot where the old one used to be. The modernistic bar is a busy place.

The original families of the village have become the 'first families' of the city — a doubtful social distinction, but potent in the bank-deposit class. Nearly all of these families came out of the boom swamped with money and the prospect of millions more, but they are not the ones who have staged the big show. The newcomers whose nimble fingers picked fat leases from the furious fire of the boom days are the ones who have built the pretentious projects (it would be gross understatement to call them houses), some of which cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000.

Kilgore has a night spot, a dime-a-dance palace which will accommodate some 2000 people. It is run by a matronly woman who has followed oil-boom towns for many years. The drillers, the roughnecks, the lease hounds, and — yes — the 'best people' from miles about come to dance to hot swing music with their own ladies or ones supplied by the

management at ten cents per go-round. Rules are strict. Nothing but beer is sold, a practice prescribed by state law for public bars but often calmly disregarded by the tonier places in the big cities. Girls must not leave the floor with patrons — before midnight. The lady herself lives in a modest house, does her own washing and housework, and drives a twelve-cylinder automobile, as do both her grown sons. One of the sons raises fine saddle horses.

Some sixty miles to the southwest is Rusk, just on the edge of the East Texas field proper and with only six producing wells in all Cherokee County. Yet the startled citizens of Rusk saw one of the greatest lease booms in the history of oil.

The boom left Rusk solid with ready cash and crammed with prospects, but still a Cinderella whom the magic slipper did not fit. The same old brown and red brick buildings flank the quiet courthouse square, just as they have done for generations. There is not a drilling rig in sight of the town. But the people are different. For a few furious months, Rusk was a hot town. Millions of dollars in lease money were dumped into the hands of the farmers and the townspeople who owned land out in the country. The town's two banks saw their deposits jump from about \$200,000 each to well over a million apiece in no time. A farmer coming to town with his eggs and vegetables couldn't even edge into the square because cars were three deep there and others were parked, running board to running board, in a solid mass all over the few streets. Strangers, keen-eyed men in leather jackets who talked fast and had plenty of money, moved quickly about the streets and dashed out over the rutted red roads to call farmers from the fields and get them to sign leases.

Then began a general cleanup of bank notes, of indebtedness in general. Farmers whose fathers had made payments all their lives on mortgages which still roosted on the farmhouse gables came into the banks and slapped down the

cash to put their homesteads in the clear. Judgments which had been on court records for years suddenly were wiped out.

For years one of the doctors had been treating the farmers in the countryside. Sometimes they could pay, many times they could not. One old lady called him in her last illness. She had no money and could raise none. To pay his fee and to repay the loan of \$250 in cash which saw her out of this life and through a decent burial, she deeded him the mineral rights to her farm. Shortly after she died, the doctor received \$52,000 for those rights.

Rusk is still untapped. One practical reason why: a well was drilled near the town and was allowed to flow with little regulation; the owner drilled another, and his production for the two wells was curtailed. He had gone to the expense of drilling another well, yet had little more return than from his single one.

Rusk at the present time awaits someone who thinks the field is worth the money to take it off the reserve list and develop it.

VI

Aside from the matter of financial and physical waste, conservation of oil has a great national significance for the United States. Without conservation of oil, one of the mightiest tendons in the strong arm of our national defense would by this time have been withered.

Texas is a great cotton state and a great agricultural state, but the value of its oil 'crop' of 1937 (the most recent year for which figures are available at this time) was more than double the combined value of its cotton crop and its farm produce, such as corn, wheat, oats, rice, grapefruit, oranges, and garden truck. The 521,000,000 barrels of oil produced, under proration, were valued at \$650,000,000, compared with about \$250,000,000 for the farm crops.

The importance of oil as a national asset is shown by comparison with the gold hoard of the United States, which amounts to 14 billions of dollars, more

than half the monetary gold of the world. The nation's petroleum reserves are valued at 15½ billions of dollars.

Thousands of plain people in Texas have felt the Midas touch of oil. To most of them, it means a comfortable living; to a few, great wealth. The small landowner is getting his money in reasonable but steady amounts. A lot of the money is being spent for further oil development, some of it vanishing into dry holes, some of it touching off new riches. But the old extravagant days are over. The multimillionaires now are the ones who discover whole new oil fields, and have the good fortune or foresight to keep a large slice of the field for themselves, as George Strake did in the Conroe field, northeast of Houston.

Strake, a dozen years ago, was a clerk chasing a dream. Many people had the idea that there was oil at Conroe; Strake did the most about it. He stuck to his dream, and when the Conroe discovery well came in about 1928, he had enough land and leases to cash in. Strake's actual wealth is not known, but it has been estimated at \$30,000,000. Still in his forties, he has one of the state's greatest oil fortunes. He has his private plane, his yacht for Gulf cruises, and recently bought the fabulous mountain castle, 'Glen Eyrie,' in Colorado.

The state of Texas profits the most. One third of the total of all state taxes comes from the oil industry. The great distances of the state have been spanned with good roads, and many more are in the making. Millions have been spent and many more millions are being spent to make its educational system a model. Whole cities owe their being to oil. There are ghost cities of cheap buildings and deserted streets where oil only visited for a short time. But the pay checks of tens of thousands of people in the state to-day are signed by oil. With the steadying influence of proration, the industry is the greatest economic force of the state.

Oil, Texans have found, is money. They keep it in the bank.

CONCENTRATION CAMP

BY DR. 'X'

I

IN Germany the words 'protective custody' have a double meaning. Originally the term meant the incarceration of people who were threatened by others and who were guarded for their own safety so that they might be protected from their enemies. Now, however, men in protective custody are mostly those who are brought, for the 'protection of the people and the State,' into a concentration camp without hearing, without court sentence, without the possibility of redress, and for an indefinite time. Frequently people sentenced by a court are taken into protective custody by the Gestapo after serving their prison sentence, often directly from the prison gate. Such, for example, was the fate of Pastor Niemöller, who, after being released from prison, was taken into the camp Sachsenhausen near Oranienburg, the camp with which we shall be concerned here. He is in solitary confinement there, and I never saw him.

I was taken into protective custody in connection with the murder of the German attaché in Paris, Ernst vom Rath, by the seventeen-year-old Polish subject, Grynspan, who had been expelled from Germany first and then had been ordered to leave France. I do not want to justify this political murder in any way, but I can understand it as the act of a hopelessly desperate person.

I do not understand, however, the attitude of Hitler and his followers in this matter. To atone for the Paris murder, the Nazis imposed a collective punish-

ment upon all German subjects of Jewish origin. First they organized a 'spontaneous' outburst of popular rage on the eve of November 10, 1938, throughout Germany at almost the same hour, and everywhere by the same methods. Abuses and tortures, even manslaughter, destruction of Jewish shops and apartments, arson of synagogues with gasoline brought for the purpose — such was the program.

The destruction of valuable property, of irretrievable art treasures, as well as of valuable tapestries in Munich, of Rembrandt pictures in Hesse, was not enough. The decision was made to bring a great number of Jews into camps for protective custody. Rough estimate places the number of victims at about sixty thousand males. In the camp with which we are dealing there were probably about six to seven thousand men.

The arrests took place in various ways, partly through the S. A. or S. S., partly through uniformed police, partly through plain-clothes men or secret police. It was the latter in my case. There appeared suddenly at our door a group of three men in civilian clothes, identified by their badges as policemen, who took us away in a car after having established through questioning that we were 'non-Aryans.' They also arrested a gentleman who happened to be visiting us. They had no warrants, and declined to give any information about our further destiny; our families for days were without any idea of what had happened

to us. We were brought into the courtyard of the police headquarters, our names and addresses were taken down, and without any further hearing we were loaded into large trucks covered with canvas, in which benches had been placed. For the older people — and the majority were over fifty — a chair had been provided so that they might climb into the truck more easily. We mention this here especially because the treatment of the uniformed police in charge of the transportation differed pleasantly from the treatment we suffered in the camp at the hands of the S. S. The crowds in the streets took little notice of the police trucks driving in a row. Only a few urchins around the police headquarters greeted us with howling.

Our trip, full of suspense, took us past the baroque palace of Oranienburg, built at the time of Frederick the Great, through the sand of Brandenburg and through deserted pine forests, thence to a large settlement. Suddenly we saw in front of us high walls (about fourteen feet) which, at intervals of two hundred yards, were crowned by watchtowers, so that the whole camp gave the impression of a Chinese city as we knew it from pictures. We drove through an iron gate, and soon after through a second gate in a second inner wall about a hundred feet from the first one. In the space between the two walls there were barracks with administration and treasury buildings, and vegetable and other gardens. The inner gate, which led through the main watchtower, bore the inscription 'Work Makes Free' — an inscription which many inmates of the camp, after years of work and vain hope for release, will probably take as sarcasm.

If, up to now, we had interpreted our fate only as a privation of liberty, our experience changed rapidly. We had to jump down from the truck without the aid of a chair, and the request for a helping hand was denied with abuse. One of our comrades, an older man lacking the agility of youth, fell in this enforced

jump and hurt the back of his head so badly that his skin had to be sewed with several stitches. Hardly were we standing on the ground when a pack of young men in S. S. uniforms, with yells and abuse, chased us to the other end of the large, inner, so-called inspection ground, which is surrounded by the barracks of the prisoners. Those who couldn't run fast enough were kicked.

We were first placed in deep rows, ordered to take off our hats and gloves, and told not to stir. Then some of us had to step out and carry through our rows signs mounted on poles with the following inscriptions: 'We are the chosen people' (with the David star over the inscription); 'We are the murderers of the diplomat vom Rath'; 'We are the destroyers of German culture.' The camp leader, evidently coming from Saxony, a slender and somewhat coquettish man with the rank of an officer of the S. S., ordered me to pick up a large paper bag, which an S. S. man put on my head as a cap, and I had to stand like that for some time. This was a harmless attempt at humiliation. Less harmless was the attempt to frighten us through the announcement that we should have to stay in the camp for twenty years. For some these threats were a cause of serious depression — even of attempted suicide.

Later that evening we were lined up at the outskirts of the camp, while trucks, arriving constantly, brought new inmates who suffered the same reception as we had before them. After the collective defamation the individual ones began. The camp commander, Baranowsky, a stocky, common-looking man with the insignia of a high rank in the S. S., passed along our rows with his staff. He addressed some, asked their profession, and, in the case of former officials, inquired the amount of their pension, usually commenting that it was too high, especially for a Jew. Arrivals who stood out because of some physical defect were especially ridiculed by him and his staff. Some men wore hearing

aids that connected the ear through a wire with a microphone. These were torn out of the ear with rude force, and afterwards inspected by the whole staff as something incredibly strange.

In the meantime the inmates of the camp had assembled for the evening roll call. We heard rhythmic beats on a big drum, and I could see a man walking through the rows of the assembled men carrying a drum in front of him and beating on it. Soon after, loud cries of pain were heard. The carrier of the drum was tied to a block and subjected to twenty-five blows from a steel rod: his punishment for attempting to escape.

It is surprising to me that inmates make any attempt to escape. Already in the first hours of our stay we could convince ourselves of the hopelessness of such an undertaking, being lined up as we were along the inner wall. The watchtowers were occupied by S. S. men with machine guns, and during the darkness rays of searchlights played from them. The guards in the watchtowers, provided with field glasses, were able to see each inmate who might move outside the barracks during the night hours, and they had strict orders to fire at an offender at once. Aside from these guards, mechanical contraptions made escape almost impossible. On the inner sides of the two encircling walls there were tall wire fences charged with a high-voltage current. Inside the wire fence there was a small strip of gravel, in front of which were signs bearing skull and crossbones and this inscription: 'Caution — neutral zone.' The guards were instructed to shoot without warning at anybody entering this zone.

II

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when we arrived; nine hours later, without food or drink, we were brought to the so-called reception barrack. At its door stood an S. S. man who tried to hasten the entrance of each novice by a

kick in the seat. Inside, inmates used as office help were sitting at long rows of typewriters, and they took down our personal data with stiff military posture — a difficult job for those who hadn't served in the army. To them we had to give account. Then we had to hand over all our valuables: rings, watches, chains, tie pins, and our wallets and purses with contents. They were exactly registered and kept in paper bags signed by us. (In contrast to reliable reports from other camps, we were given back our money to the last cent and all valuables on the day of our release.)

After this we were taken to another room in which we were forced to strip. Then our heads were clipped short and all signs of beard were removed. According to an old tradition in Germany, the cropped hair is a distinguishing mark of the serf in contrast to the free man. After this procedure and a sort of 'medical examination' by another inmate employed as attendant, we received the benefit of a hot shower, which somewhat refreshed us and loosened up our limbs, stiff from the long stand in the cold.

Then we were fitted out. Strange combinations! The younger and thinner men received, for the most part, old uniforms, even officers' coats without insignia. Others received striped prisoners' garb of relatively light material, a shirt, a pair of socks, and a suit of tissue-thin underwear. No vest, no coat. As head-gear there were old soldiers' caps without cockades. It goes without saying that it was very difficult to find clothes fitting the various sizes and shapes. We were a *sight grotesque as well as sad*.

So, after standing almost continuously for thirteen hours in the cold November air, we were taken to our barracks. There we were permitted to lie down on straw for a short rest until morning. Not until the next day did we receive food and drink. Other groups were much worse off. Some were on their feet for twenty-six hours before they were taken to the barracks.

Our barracks, built for one hundred and fifty men, contained about three hundred and fifty, so that we could not lie on our backs but only on our sides, and could scarcely move without disturbing our neighbors. At half-past six the roll call took place. There were three roll calls a day, one in the morning, one at noon, and a third in the late afternoon. At each roll call we stood at attention, and at least three hours a day were taken up by these roll calls. All except those in the camp hospital had to attend. Some came leaning on the arms of their companions, even men with paralysis who should have been dismissed at once from imprisonment, others with defective feet, and finally those who were unable to move at all and had to be carried. Some among them must have been seriously ill, or else it would hardly have happened that one dropped dead at the roll call — actually dead, for an S. S. man failed in his attempt to revive him by kicks. This 'superior officer' then ordered the comrades of the dead man to close his eyes.

One evening at inspection, the camp commander gave us an address in which he said that we were responsible for the murder of Herr vom Rath and that therefore we had committed a crime against the nation and the state; that we were in a camp for protective custody, which was not a prison or a penitentiary at all, nor a sanitarium either, but solely an educational institution; that we should learn here how to behave in dealing with a 'guest nation' (he really said 'guest' nation instead of 'host' nation); that the main thing was unconditional obedience and that all S. S. men were our superior officers; that each attempt at disobedience would be punished, in some cases by corporal punishment, and that all S. S. men were entitled to use their arms in any attempt at resistance or escape.

I have been asked repeatedly where all the men were procured who torment the inmates of the camps, often with

sadistic lust. We must not forget that a career in the S. S. allures, as a stepping-stone, many a youth who cannot quite make the military career, whether for financial reasons or for lack of educational background. There are certainly a great number among them who personify brutality and are glad to be allowed to use their instincts without check against defenseless people. But there are also others who, for the sake of a career, run with the pack, and whose cruelties have been developed by the example of the 'talented' sadists.

III

I have already said that our barracks were overcrowded. It should be added that, although these barracks contained toilets and washrooms, neither came up to the most modest demands of modern hygiene. The cleansing of our bodies took place in a special room and was limited to a short washing of the upper extremities with cold water. A weekly warm shower was supposed to be provided, but with the overcrowding of the camp it was several weeks before a bath was available for each one. There was, of course, no toilet paper.

The cleansing of mouth and teeth was possible only after a two weeks' stay, when we had access to our money and could buy toothbrushes and tooth paste. The towel situation was deplorable. One towel a week was issued for each inmate, but there was no provision for keeping these towels separately. Not unnaturally skin infections, rashes, and boils were frequent. The barracks were heated by iron stoves, some of which were installed only after our admission to the camp, and we had enjoyed them for but a very short time when a sudden restriction denied us the use of them for one week. It was claimed that in one of the 'Jew barracks' the stove had been lighted at a time when it wasn't allowed.

Since our clothing did not offer enough protection against the prevailing cold —

the temperatures were around freezing point — the restriction resulted in many diseases of the respiratory organs. These affected us in two ways: for one, the prisoners with colds were much tormented by coughing, and, for another, the rest of us suffered much from their discomforts. In the room in which we were lying penned up together on the straw, with two covers at the most, the snoring alone of the many men produced a noise like a spinning mill. Now the barking and panting noise of the coughing was added to that. We were given only one handkerchief every two weeks. To make matters worse, there was no warm water for washing our handkerchiefs and it was impossible to dry them at the stove.

The food was probably sufficient as far as quantity goes, although our younger companions, who had to work very hard, could not satisfy their appetites. Besides the so-called *Kommissbrot* (a dark bread baked for use in the army), which was difficult to digest for the city dweller not accustomed to hard physical labor, we usually had thick soups of leguminous plants or potatoes, with lumps of whale meat which, as far as I could find out, came in cans and tasted something like pork. However, it had nothing of the oily taste that might have been expected. Occasionally we had sweet milk soups with tapioca for breakfast, and for noon or evening meal we had sandwiches with sausage, cheese, margarine, and jam. It is an open question whether the decided loss in weight of many prisoners was due to the unusual food or to the mental depression. Food so poor in vitamins, however, must cause harm if taken for a long space of time.

After a fortnight we were able to use the money which we had brought in or was sent to us, and it became possible to complete and improve our diet from the canteen at our own expense. We were lined up in rows exactly in the order of our prison numbers, which had

been sewed in black on white on our clothes. (This also is penitentiary procedure, for an inmate of the penitentiary is not an individual any more, but only a numbered being without a name.) Then we were led into the barracks where an S. S. man sitting behind a sort of teller's window disbursed the desired sum, up to fifteen marks a week. Somehow I must have transgressed against the military discipline in this procedure. I presume that I had my cap in the wrong hand. Instead of the money I received a violent blow on the back of my hand with a heavy stick which was lying next to the paymaster on his table, obviously for such purposes. Many weeks after this experience the back of my hand was still painful and swollen.

Our daily occupation differed according to age. Prisoners below the forty-fifth year were used for especially hard labor outside the camp in the 'clinker works.' Heavy bags of cement had to be carried for long distances, and the return to the starting point had to be covered at a running pace. For a while the older prisoners were also used outside the camp working on an S. S. settlement. They had to dig or carry cement blocks. All this work was done under the supervision of young S. S. men, most of whom were boys of sixteen to twenty years from former Austria. They circled around us armed with loaded guns or light machine guns. They drove us on and misused their position of superiority with all sorts of torments. If presumably a little offense had been committed, especially if our speed of work didn't satisfy them, they might demand that the prisoner should do knee-bends until he was exhausted or that he roll down the slope a dozen times. In our camp were prisoners ranging in age from fourteen to eighty-four.

Besides tormenting us physically, the S. S. guard continually tried to torment us morally. Coming partly from the lowest proletariat, they tried to annoy us

with quotations from the *Stürmer*. They asked us about the accuracy of supposed quotations from the Talmud which are purported to order the Jew to hate other nations, and especially all Christians. They had little success with these questions, since the prisoners had to answer almost without exception that they did not know more than the name of the Talmud.

Beyond that they tried personal defamation. One of our companions was asked by an S. S. man whether he had been a soldier and what rank he had held in the war. He answered, 'Lieutenant.' The S. S. man said, 'But you were only behind the lines.' 'No,' replied our companion, 'I was at the front.' 'I command you to answer this question with "behind the lines,"' the S. S. man corrected him; 'German history would lie if Jews had actually been at the front, so where were you?' And the old soldier, who had come back decorated with high medals from the war in which he had fought and bled for his German fatherland, was forced to answer, 'Behind the lines.'

Next to physical labor, military drill played an important part, especially for the older men. Still to-day I can hear the command: 'Eyes right! Eyes front!' The drill consisted mainly of marching in large formations and in turns and practising the salute — a quick removal of the cap. Those who did not greet a passing S. S. man with this procedure laid themselves open to severe punishment. A sixty-five-year-old lawyer, who in spite of glasses could see very little, did not salute a passing 'superior officer,' and was struck so severely in the face that his glasses were broken. His excuse that he was extremely nearsighted was answered with curses.

There was no age limit for participation in the drill, which often lasted between six and eight hours a day. Even the old people had to take part. Those who could not march were lined up in long rows outside the barracks and

were not allowed to move, a performance which on cold days meant especial torture for them.

Those who reported for treatment in the infirmary had to line up in front of the infirmary barracks. After a prolonged waiting — often after hours — a doctor appeared and asked about the complaints. Thereupon he divided the prisoners into two categories: category one was examined and received into the sickroom if the occasion warranted it. In very grave cases — supposedly very rarely — inmates were taken to the police infirmary in Berlin. Category two was lined up without any sort of examination in front of the barracks, sometimes for hours, as a punishment, and then sent back to the barracks with the usual reprimands. The chief physician of the camp was called 'Dr. Cruel' by the old inmates. (His real name was Irrsam. 'Cruel' in German is *grausam*; the pun, therefore, is not translatable.)

How many men have become the victims of medical treatment — or rather of the lack of it — it is hard to say. I at least have learned about a case where an inmate of our category, about fifty years old, was rejected by the infirmary, treated unprofessionally in the first-aid station, and died the next day. I am not in a position to give statistical data as to whether, and to what extent, suicides of desperate prisoners have taken place. I had occasion only twice to see how prisoners tried to run into the charged wires of the fence in order to commit suicide. They were stopped at the last moment. One morning the corpse of a man who had succeeded in his undertaking was hanging in the meshes. It was said that it was the prisoner whose punishment we had witnessed on the day of our arrival at the camp.

As far as we could see, there was no possibility in camp for any religious services. Sundays are workdays for the inmates. Among the Jewish prisoners the rabbis were treated especially badly.

Officially the fight against religious affiliations is not admitted, but as a matter of fact National Socialism is no less anti-religious than Bolshevism, with the only difference that it has not yet developed quite so far in the amalgamation of political and religious ideologies.

Even in the evening, when we had sunk wearily on our straw cots, we were not safe from the cruel whims of the S. S. men. If we didn't jump up quickly enough at their sudden appearance they made us practise jumping up and lying down until we were exhausted, or they had the entire ward line up outside the barracks in the cold and stand for half an hour or longer in the attitude of the 'Saxon Salute' — that is, with hands folded behind the head. If an S. S. man entered the barracks in the daytime and was not seen at once by the inmate cleaning up and not saluted, then he might very well have the 'culprit' crawl in and out of the straw a dozen times for punishment. The guards were like mean children who torment animals.

IV

When the day of release came we were at first searched most carefully for any sort of written notes. Notes from our

family — a short, well-watched exchange was allowed every week — had to be left behind. Then we were permitted to put on our civilian clothes, but how they looked! They had been disinfected under high steam pressure and had been wrapped in bundles. They looked like the outfits of tramps, all creased and out of shape. Soft felt hats had turned into cardboard-like monsters no longer usable, and even on our short trip back they could not be worn.

The release took almost twelve hours, during which we had to stand in line waiting in the open air, without food. Part of the release ceremonies was the address of an S. S. man. He called our attention to the fact that we were forbidden to tell anything that we had seen in the camp. Although we all had to fill in a form of this nature, I cannot recognize an obligation in this respect, not only because it was forced, but also because it was imposed by a party that habitually does not keep its promises.

Since for the first time in a long life we had become the objects of a course of action that deprived us of any liberty, it is somewhat difficult to judge whether the commander of the camp was right in saying that the camp was no prison, no penitentiary.

THE FEEBLE OF THE WHO'S

BY THEODORE SPENCER

ONCE there was a poorflosser of Angleish Littlesure who was axed to deliver a spleach. Ass a profflexor of Flattershure he was at a loose for high-dears. All he was used to undoing was to dequiver a lacksure. And his hawdiunce was exhumausted from laxatures. So, instead of deflouring a squeach, the proffluxor inwented a Feeble. It was nomenhated the Feeble of the Who's and the Guilden Yeggs.

Ownc upon a teem there was a Who's, whose nom was Ray's On. The Who's had a whom and the whome had a he and the he had an Aristable. The Who's had a raisonable stall in the Aristable. In the rayonable stall in the whome of the Aristable the Who's laid guilden Yeggs. A Yegg for breathing, a yegg for thrinking, a yegg for leevig. And for trying: one half Yegg.

The Who's lived yappy for umps and umps of years, laying a Yegg for brathing, a Yegg for brinking, a Yegg for loofing. And for trying: one half Yegg. And the he in the whome in the Aristable sold the Yeggs to polets and planters and philandosophers and to pleable of hall sots and unkinds.

And the Who's lived yappy, flaying his Yeggs, for in one stall next him was a plihg, and in one stall flext him was a brird. And the Who's, as he flayed his Yeggs, would say: 'Half a plihg, and prart a blurred, what a royanable Who's am high!' And he played his Yeggs; a Yegg for broothing, a Yegg for clinking, a Yegg for loaving. And for trying: one half Yegg.

So he looved and brothered and clank and almost tried, in the Aristable.

But one questing day there came a Roos, O a Roos. The next questing day

there came a Froy, dam! a Froy. And there blimped behind the roos a Dew John Dooy with the Floy, Floy. And the Roos and the Floy and the limping DooJohn said to the he who honed the Who's in the Aristable: 'Why do you keep that rayonable Who's?' 'Get the Yeggs direct!' said the Roos. 'Still the Who's for the Yeggs!' said the Froy. 'Froyd Yeggs for me!' said the Doojohn.

And they yalked and yolked and balked and neighsed to the he who yawned the whom of the Who's in the Aristable.

Then the Who's played a guilden Yegg, for loofing.

'How queasy it comes!' said the RoosO. 'How teasy it homes!' said the Froydam. 'How pleasy it sooms!' said the Doojohn.

And the Doojohn, the Floy and the Roos all plied: 'Give us a Yegg without the Who's!'

The he who honed the Who's in the Aristable replared: 'This Who's is rayonable, this is a raisinable Who's, half plihg, half blurred; he kneads deflection and phlyme to propear his Yeggs.'

The Roos and the Floy and the Doojohn said, 'Ho! No! Thairs plots of Yeggs henside. Hready plade. Spill the Who's, and get the Yeggs diarrhect! Take him oot and skill him!'

And the he was convlincend and he led the Who's out of the Aristable. And he took a crazor and sluiced the whomb of the Who's, to get the guilden Yeggs direct. But he only found half a Yegg; for the Who's had dried.

And the Roos and the Froy and the blimping Doojohn were smangry and gestroyed the Aristable. The he who honed their, was left to the holpen air.

Which is the end of the Feeble.

THE SCHISM

BY THEODORE MORRISON

The *Jewes* their beds, and offices of ease,
Plac't *North* and *South*, for these cleane purposes;
That mans uncomely froth might not molest
Gods wayes and walks, which lie still East and West.

— HERRICK

FROM holy to unhallowed scene
(Such alternation is our lot)
From cleanly straightway to unclean
A tincture never quite forgot.

From duty well or badly kept
Straightway to bed; but should a trace
Hint that we loved before we slept
We quickly turn aside the face.

The madman desecrates the Host.
And yet there's not a voice we hear,
No, not the pang that moves us most
To make our muddied lives run clear,

But through the body it will dart
Taking the flesh for sounding-board.
The plaited thorns would pierce no heart
Pierced they not too the sensual cord.

While flesh is flesh and through it stalk
Those unperturbed familiar beasts
That thrust their heads up in our talk
And slaver at our gravest feasts

No art that we can lightly find
Will cure the guilt they make us feel.
The ancestral schism of the mind
Pursues us like a dog at heel.

Yet say that love refused to take
The luxury before it thrown,
Or would not lash itself to break
Storm-like upon its longed-for zone,

Then how of all that we think good
Might the least spray put forth its flower?
Dead spring can leaf no waiting wood.
The withered womb starves every power.

I do not shame, remembering this,
To think how green tides gulped the land
With an insatiable kiss,
And left their dried foam on the sand.

THE DEPARTURE

BY GEORGE ALLEN

Now the embarkation is all embarked,
Voices echo and vanish, then the tugs
Relinquish out of harbor; the wind freshens,
No longer held away by windward towers;

Dimmer the delicate coast recedes, and goes;
Now the anchor is all of it within,
The forward way is on, position quivers,
Feeling the bows go butting through the water;

With shiver and shock and easy steady thud
Of engine in the middle of the ship,
Of screw within the water's backward cave
Driving and never ceasing swirling aft.

Now we are out, with gentle swinging up
And down along the folded prairie sea.
Now the beginning heart is high, and the Watch
Maintains a course, with all the ocean ahead.

POLAND

BY WALTER DURANTY

I

THE Poles have reason to know the glory and horror of war. In their long and stormy history they have experienced defeat and triumph, conquest and servitude. To-day they stand on the brink of a struggle as harsh and terrible as any in their past. They say they will meet it boldly — ‘they’ say, but who are ‘they’? The speeches of Polish leaders are full of courage and defiance, but what do the people feel, the men and women of Poland whose lives and homes are menaced? Do they know what lies before them? With what spirit do they face it?

I have visited Poland constantly for more than fifteen years. To find now what its people are thinking I did not go to the statesmen or generals, the rulers and guides, but rather to those who follow, the ones who will bear the brunt. They were willing enough to talk, to tell a foreigner what they thought and hoped and feared, but the ‘man in the street,’ as we call him, does not always think for himself, and finds it hard to express his thoughts in a clear and logical way. He is prone to repeat what he has read or heard, without thinking — perhaps because he believes that it sounds well, or simply because it is easier for him. Thus I collected a mass of opinions and statements, for the most part so similar that there seemed little difference between them. Then I saw that they were like the photographs in a film. Any two of them together look almost exactly the same, but gradually, as the film is un-

reeled, the picture takes shape and a story is told.

My task was to set together from hundreds of sayings and facts the picture that told a story, the story of Poland now, as it stands on the brink of war. But my picture is made with words, with ideas as well as scenes. It must be shown with footnotes, because always it deals with the Why as well as the What and How. Not only what people think, what they say, and what they do, but why they say it and think it and do it.

I thought that I was acquainted with Poland and its people, but there were two things I did not know or expect to find: the degree to which its past is mixed with and part of its present, and the absence of signs to show the greatness and nearness of danger. The use of words like ‘storm’ and ‘abyss’ and ‘tension’ had created in my mind the thought of clouds and darkness, the visible tokens of coming disturbance, and their physical effect upon man and beast. Instead, the land was smiling in the brightness of northern summer. The plants of the earth were growing, and everywhere men and women went on with the business of life, in the field and town or city. Here and there, of course, there were soldiers marching, or guns on trucks in a siding, or a bayonet on a war-loan poster. But those were the only signs, and all my pictures were taken in clear, warm, peaceful light, with no sounds of thunder or tempest to warn of the wrath to come.

II

'The Poles are Slavs with brains, but the Russians are only Slavs,' said the man at the County Fair. The air was heavy with heat and the odors of animals, and a moment before he was reckoning the weight of a steer which he wished to buy, but suddenly, so strange is the magic of words, I was back in a café in Paris, long ago before the war, with my friend, Ignace Pilinski, the first Pole I ever knew.

'The Poles are Slavs with hearts, but the Russians are only Slavs,' I quoted mechanically, for that was one of Pilinski's favorite sayings.

The dealer looked at me in surprise and twitched at his rainbow tie. 'With brains *and* hearts, you are right, but . . .'

'And what about Germans?' I asked.

He spat on the dusty grass. 'We will smash them,' he said, 'like flies. With the Germans we have a long score, and now comes the time to pay. The Germans' — his voice rang scorn — 'we smashed them before at Tannenberg, and now we shall smash them again.'

I stared at him. 'Tannenberg? But Hindenburg won that battle, from the Russians in '14.'

'At Tannenberg, in fourteen *hundred*, the Polish Army defeated the Teutonic Knights, and . . .'

'Oh yes, of course,' I gasped, 'but wasn't that long ago?'

He replied in a firm voice, 'We beat the Germans then, and now we shall beat them again.'

At the Fair there were scores of prizes, for livestock and butter and eggs and honey and jams and vegetables and fruit, and then there was one chief prize for the best exhibit of all. It was won by a great black bull, and the owner's little daughter, a plump child of ten with fuzzy hair, stepped out to receive a blue ribbon with a gold star which the leading local magnate, who looked like Don Quixote, pinned on to her yellow frock.

'What's the bull's name?' I asked her. She said, 'It is Jan Sobieski,' then added something which I did not catch, and everyone applauded. A Boy Scout touched my arm. 'The girl say her Mister Bull,' he told me in labored English, 'he have name of Jan Sobieski who save Vienna from Turks as we save Europe from Germans.'

'The child said that?' I asked. 'As you save Europe from Germans?'

'Yes, that is why people shout. They glad for Jan Sobieski and that we save Europe from Germans.'

The idea of Poland's mission seems general and deep-rooted. For instance, the boy from the Air Academy just home in Warsaw on leave, the first time since the end of March. He was young and handsome and gay, with life like a cup in his hand, and the world at his feet to play with, but I knew that his chance to be alive at Christmas was one in a hundred, if war came. When I said, rather desperately, 'There must be some way out — some compromise, I mean. If the Germans would agree . . .' he cut me quickly short: 'You cannot *trust* the Germans. Look how Prussia betrayed us in 1790 to Catherine of Russia. And Hitler's just the same. I mean at the end of April, when in ten words he tore up a treaty of peace which he'd promised to keep for ten years. And what he did to Prague, after giving his word at Munich. But we are Poles, not Czechs, and we know that the Germans must be stopped, now, before they go any further. Their aim is to dominate Europe, and if others don't know it, we do, and are ready to fight their battle.'

'No, I don't agree with Remarque,' said my friend the Polish reporter, and drummed his knuckles on the café table. 'I'm sorry they've burned his books, but I don't really think he was right.'

I'd been speaking of the passage in *All Quiet on the Western Front* when the French and German soldier in the shell

hole agreed that men of the people were everywhere much the same and would all be friends if once they could win themselves free from the slogans their masters had taught them.

'Remarque may have thought that was true, but it is not true about Poland. The Germans are not our friends. No Germans are our friends. Perhaps once, but not any longer — we know our friends and foes. Our enemy is Germany, which wants to steal Danzig from us and the Corridor, although both have really belonged to Poland since . . .'

'Oh yes,' I nodded wearily. 'They were yours five hundred years ago and so you must fight for them now.'

'That is just what I mean. In 1526 the frontiers of Poland were . . .'

'Why always bring in history? Americans never think . . .'

'Of course, you can't understand. But did you ever reflect that United States history began when Poland's history ended? Almost year for year, when you began we ended, and Poland had no history. There was no Poland at all while your history was being written. Don't you see what that means to us? Shall I say that Poland was dead — and came to life again? Can't you see that its life must resume from the point where it had stopped? Can't you see what Danzig means and why we must either fight or let Poland sink back to the grave?'

I pondered that conversation and thought that it told me much, that perhaps my friend was saying what the others all tried to say. And although the sky was clear, there was this sign of coming storm, that everyone talked of the war and all used much the same terms, as if — which was doubtless true — their minds were all keyed to the same pitch by a single tension. For instance, the cadet's phrase, 'We are Poles, not Czechs.' I heard that on every side, and always it was spoken with finality, as a decisive fact which made further argument needless.

III

We were sitting after dinner on the terrace before the house. The night was very still, and we watched the moon rise through the trees across the lake.

'So peaceful,' said my host, 'but . . . yes, I have it here.' He took from his wallet a faded snapshot of the building behind us gutted by fire, with black smoke marks on the columns and a dead horse with stiff legs in the air at the very place where we sat. 'The Russians did that,' he said, 'in the retreat from Lemberg. Everything was destroyed, all the furniture and books and the family portraits and relics. Just like my mother's home — she was American, you know — I mean her old home in the South. This house had been burnt before in the war with Sweden, the year Charles XII was beaten at Poltava. But that is Poland's fate and now — is it coming again? No, not fate,' he added reflectively, 'but geography. Poland's place on the map between Russia and Germany, without any natural barriers. That is why we're a fighting race; we had to fight to survive.'

I scarcely heard what he said because my mind was ablaze with excitement. 'That is it,' I cried. 'Like the South! The parallel is exact — I mean the romantic . . .'

'Except that we Poles were more fortunate — for once. The war was a new beginning and we have rebuilt our house.'

The parallel is not exact, but there is much of the South about Poland. Its reverence for old memories, for chivalry and tradition, so stressed that tradition seems to have taken the place of reality. You feel that the conditions of which the Southerner speaks can never have really existed. The South he tells of is a dream country and he is living in that dream, which is the product of his compensation for defeat. There is much of this about Poland. There has been, not for two

generations but for six, a romance Poland, a Poland of tradition, where men were brave and courteous and women were fair and kind. And the peasants knew their place and sang and danced on the old plantations, and 'God's in his heaven: all's right with the world.'

It is partly the universal dream of 'the good old days' before the War, the Revolution, or the Depression, a childhood dream or throwback fantasy, — whatever you care to call it, — escape mechanism or release from present care. And sometimes nations dream it, like Poland or the South. Because in it there was truth, and its glory and sweetness were real, at least in part, and their memory shines more brightly by contrast with the defeat and sorrow in which their country perished. Of course the Poles are romantic, incredibly so. More romantic than *Gone with the Wind*, or is that not real too, as D'Artagnan was real and Robin Hood and Don Quixote?

The old priest shook his head. 'Yes, the Boy Scout movement is good, but I'm not so sure of the teaching. It is not the same as in the old days.' I thought he was deploring the lack of religious education, and said something of the sort.

'Oh no,' he replied, 'I don't mean that at all. But teaching of Poland's history — why, I'm sure that most of these youngsters hardly study it at all. In the old days it was different.'

And then he went on to speak of this educational work, in which the Church took the lead. It began, he said, in the middle of the last century, during the 'Dark Years' which followed the abortive revolts, when Poland's oppressors were trying to stamp out the national spirit and language. What he said was the key to the riddle which had puzzled me before, why the man in the street and the peasant on the farm think and speak in historical terms as readily as statesmen. The priest now made it clear, as he

told how leagues were formed for the 'underground' teaching of Polish language and history. 'All over the country, mind you, every schoolteacher and the young men and women who had received a good education — all of them joined the movement. There were scores and hundreds arrested, but that only made them more eager. And the children learned so quickly. It shows that a child will learn anything if it holds his interest. It wasn't like work any more, but a game full of secrecy and excitement. And always,' he added proudly, 'the Church played a very large part. Because we were close to the people and shared their inmost thoughts. Our enemies tried hard in different parts of Poland to change our people's religion, or to use it for their ends — the Lutherans in the West, and the upper clergy of the Orthodox Church in Russian Poland. But, although I shouldn't say it, our priests were first Poles and then priests.'

It was cool under the green arbor of the little restaurant by the river near the big open-air public baths. An old man played an accordion and a few couples danced without enthusiasm on the bare earth floor. They drank beer and brought their own food, coarse hunks of black bread with cheese or onion, not meat. The proprietor looked discouraged. 'As you see,' he answered glumly when I asked how business was. 'They want the new music nowadays — a phonograph or nickelodeon, as they used to call it in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, when I worked in the coal mine. Or like that over there' — he pointed to a more flashy establishment across the road where a loud-speaker blared out jazz music.

The accordion player laid down his instrument, drained his glass, and nodded his head. 'Yes,' he said, 'they don't care for the old tunes nowadays, but when I was young I remember . . . Ah, yes, I made a good living in those days, all over the country.'

'At fairs?' I asked.

'Not only at fairs, but everywhere in the villages. At harvest time it was best, but Christmas and Easter were good too.'

I offered him more beer and he told a rambling story of the lonely Polish villages where the people had no amusements, not even a place to meet, except in church on Sundays and the little village inn, and the square before it in summer. They played no games in those days and had no village hall or cinema, nor any money to speak of. They danced, he said, for hours, and at intervals someone sang, and all of them sang in chorus. There were storytellers too, but that was a different thing.

So this was the pattern, woven clear by two old men, which led to the source of Poland's universal patriotism. In the old days Poland's weakness was the gap between rulers and people. There was really no middle class, and until the nineteenth century the gentry could say, as they did, that they were really Poland. Between 1840 and 1900 an enormous change was accomplished, and the people, even the poorest and most illiterate, were brought to share the glories of the past and to feel that they who owned no worldly goods yet had part of a priceless possession.

It was not the priests alone, but the youth of the upper classes who led the patriotic campaign. The element of danger, and the feeling of a subject race that it was outwitting its masters, sent young men and women by thousands to what would now be called propaganda work. In the towns it was organized through student bodies, musical associations, and the so-called welfare societies. In the village the church and the schoolhouse were centres of the movement. In village and town alike, popular fondness for singing and dancing was used as a powerful lever. The old man with his accordion and his predecessors, the flute players and pipers, the fiddlers

and tellers of tales, had done more, perhaps, to kindle and feed the flame of Polish patriotism than the great revival of national literature in the middle of last century, which, great as were its effects, reached only a small part of the people.

Another factor which tended to spread patriotism in the villages was the 'decay,' in a material sense, of noble families, who slid gradually down the scale of property until all over Poland to-day there are bearers of ancient names who own farms so small that there is no standard of comparison in America except the 'poor white trash' in the South. These Poles, however, did not think of themselves and were not thought of by their neighbors as 'trash.' They cling jealously to their titles and coats of arms and still refuse to intermarry with more prosperous but low-born farmers. Despite their poverty, they were and are the leaders in the villages, and thus have transmitted direct the tradition of glory and patriotism — of 'our,' the gentry's, Poland — to the peasant masses whom their ancestors had regarded as little more than cattle.

IV

'I'm less afraid here than in Paris,' said the woman. 'Here they don't talk of air raids so much, but I suppose there is just as much danger.' She was manageress of a store that sold peasant pottery and carving and handwoven linen, a branch of one of the big coöperatives which encouraged handicraft in the villages.

'But I thought you'd just come from Paris,' I said. 'Weren't you telling me about the big order you'd received and that you were afraid the war would begin before you could deliver it? The air-raid scares in Paris were last year, at the time of the Crisis.'

'They keep talking about it all the time, and downstairs in every house, outside the lodge of the concierge, there are plans of the cellar and how to reach it in

case of alarm, and the addresses of shelters and first-aid stations. So everyone there is nervous, but here . . .' She smiled. 'I suppose they take some precautions, but the Pole says, "Who cares? If it comes, I can't avoid it."' "

'Slavic fatalism,' I murmured, 'the Russian *nichevo*.'

'Oh, it's more than *nichevo*. There's no language in the world which has so many ways as Polish of saying, "Who cares?" or "What of it?" or "A man can only die once." Perhaps the French and the English have more to lose than we have. Or their lives are more secure. But the Poles think only of to-day and have no care for the future.'

I could not let that pass. 'They think of yesterday, too. I've never heard so much history as in the last four weeks.'

Her face changed. 'That's different,' she said seriously. 'That's Poland's past, not our own. We don't think lightly of Poland.'

She was certainly right about air raids. It is a burning topic in Paris and London, and the newspapers are full of it. But in Warsaw and Polish towns the subject was hardly mentioned, and then what you generally heard was what *we* will do to Breslau or Königsberg or Danzig — and to Berlin as well, which, as everyone said, is much nearer the Polish frontier than Warsaw is to Germany. For good or ill — call it insouciance or boasting, as you please — I found no trace of defeatism anywhere in Poland. To hear the people talk, one might think that Poland, not Germany, was the great industrial colossus. And men said, as if they meant it, 'Don't forget, one Pole is worth three Germans' — a phrase I had not heard since the days of 1914, when the English still believed that one of their volunteer soldiers was worth three German conscripts.

I said as much one day to a Polish professor, who shook his head rather sadly. 'It is good that my people are brave, but they are also reckless. The trouble with us has been that we don't say such

things without meaning them. We really believe they're true. How often has Poland paid dear for attacking a stronger enemy, or fighting against great odds!'

All the same, it was refreshing after the panic-mongering of London and Paris and their seeming willingness to leave all initiative to the Axis Powers.

'Of course, the feeling exists, but it's very much less than it was. We've the Germans to thank for that.' The speaker was a rabbi in a small Jewish community near Warsaw. 'The Poles,' he continued, 'have become very anti-German; there's a boycott of German goods and German films and even the German language. Now nothing to-day is more German than anti-Semitism. So even those circles in Poland which were most against the Jews have dropped it like hot iron. What is more, there's a double reaction. Perhaps it's the first time in history that my race shares Polish sentiment wholly — the common hatred of Germany. I could tell you dozens of cases. Not only the Loan, of course, although more Jewish money has gone to the recent war loans than was ever subscribed before. But individual cases. I know of an old Jew whose son was mobilized not long ago. It had been a grief to the father when his son was called for military service, but this time the old man went with him to the depot and handed a gold cigarette case to the officer in command. "I give you my only treasure for Poland," he said, "as well as my son."

'And thousands of our girls have volunteered for the "Woman's Auxiliary Service" which is being organized to replace men called to the colors or drafted for special work in the factories and mines. Some of them even have military training — not, I think, to fight, but for sentry and police duty guarding bridges and warehouses in the areas behind the front. I never expected,' he added thoughtfully, 'to see Jewish girls volunteer for an organization controlled by the Polish

Army. When young men were called as recruits, they always tried to avoid it, but now you could almost say they have joined the colors as eagerly as the Poles.'

'Are the Poles really eager?' I asked. 'Don't they know what this war will be like?'

'My brother is employed at one of the central depots, and he said that of seventeen thousand men called up there only thirty-three were missing, and of these two had died, and in five of the other cases relatives came instead and said their brothers couldn't be reached and offered to take their place.'

I heard similar figures elsewhere, surprising as it sounds. On the other hand, the Polish Army has good food, clothing, and quarters, which means much in a country as poor as Poland, where probably a third of the population gets less than it wants to eat. Then, too, soldiers are well treated to-day in Poland, — there seems no doubt about that, — infinitely better than in Russian and German armies of the old days. Before the World War, the day on which recruits were called up was a day of mourning throughout Poland. It now is a celebration, with music and flags and song.

V

In the inner yard of a post office not far from the centre of Warsaw they are building an air-raid shelter to hold several hundred people. So one of the workers told me as we stood talking while a patch of concrete was drying. He was savagely patriotic and yet sharply opposed to the government. 'I'm a Socialist,' he said, 'and have been for fifteen years — joined the party when I finished my army service. This country is governed all wrong; it's a dictatorship without a dictator — or with two of them, if you like, because the Marshal and the President run it all between them.'

I had heard the same thing before.

As one of the editors of a Warsaw newspaper put it, 'Marshal Smigly-Rydz and President Moscicki are like the two Consuls in Rome in the days of the Republic, with the important difference that there are no Roman Senate and no Tribunes to act as a check on them.' The worker, however, thought that Marshal Smigly-Rydz carried more weight than the President. 'What about Colonel Beck?' I asked.

He shrugged his shoulders disdainfully. 'I suppose he's all right now, and of course his last speech was fine — a good strong soldierly speech, and just what the country wanted. But before we were not so sure; he'd played too close with the Germans.'

'But that was Pilsudski's policy,' I said, 'since the pact of 1934.'

The man's face grew bright. 'The old Marshal — he was different. If only we had him now! He made that deal for Poland's sake and for Peace. And besides,' — he lowered his voice, — 'if the French had been willing to fight before, there'd be no German danger to-day.'

It is widely believed in well-informed circles in Europe, and the report has never been successfully refuted, that after Hitler came to power, early in 1933, Marshal Pilsudski proposed to France to clip his claws by force, or at least by an armed demonstration, but the offer was refused.

'But Pilsudski made himself dictator,' I objected. 'Is he not the real founder of the present régime?'

'That was different too, Parliament had broken down into dozens of little groups, and all of them squabbled and argued all the time and left the country's business undone. It simply had to end — the old Marshal understood that. But he was a true democrat, he was, as well as the greatest soldier and patriot that ever lived. And a true Socialist at heart — you know, he founded our party. The country would stand anything from him, but these others . . .'

He checked himself, and added more slowly: 'Did you know that none of the Opposition parties would vote in the last elections? The Parliament we have now doesn't represent the people, but only the bosses, the landowners and bankers and big boys, who've feathered their nests when the rest of the country is so poor. Just look at the municipal elections last December where the voting was free: the Opposition won twice as many seats as the Government, and it would be the same in Parliament if they changed the electoral law.' Again he paused, then continued, 'I mean, if there wasn't going to be war — that is, if there was no German threat and everything was peaceful. Of course now we're all for the Government and there can't be a thought of a change. It's the same with the Peasant Party. They are Opposition too, but Witos, their leader who recently came back from exile, makes nothing but patriotic speeches.'

'You think there is sure to be war?'

'Not a doubt, unless Hitler pipes down, and there isn't much chance of that. We'll never surrender Danzig. They say it's a German town, and there was a time when I thought an arrangement might be made, — before March, that was, — but now . . . well, now we all of us know the way Hitler acts and what his word's worth. It isn't Danzig really, it's the whole Pomorze [Corridor] they want, and that was always Polish; there was always a Polish majority — even Germans can't deny that. So we'll fight to keep hold of Danzig if it takes the last man in the country. I'm mobilized myself, for that matter — have my uniform ready at home and wait orders at any minute. There are lots of us like that, of the older classes. We were ordered to join, and did, at the end of March, you know. Then later the men with jobs were released and some of the farmers too.'

In Warsaw I met an elderly man who once had been attached to a geological

mission in Khiva, the oldest city on earth, in the Central Asian desert. He had worked out a theory that the Aral Sea and the Caspian and the Black Sea were originally one ocean until it broke through the Dardanelles into the Mediterranean and left the Caspian and the Sea of Aral high and dry, or anyway drying, in the desert. And if somewhere they dug a canal . . .

I found it rather confusing, but the geologist had a plan for a canal somewhere out in the desert, to make it green and fertile and blooming like a rose. And he said, 'When the war is over, perhaps I can go back to Russia and put my plan before them. I have heard that they want a canal, and I have all the figures prepared. Perhaps Stalin himself would be interested — after the war.'

'Do you like the Russians?' I asked.

'Oh no — you see, I am Polish. But I hear that they want to reclaim the desert, and of course they will need help, so I . . .'

'Doesn't Poland need Russian help — if war comes?'

'You mean, against the Germans? But that is a different thing. We will fight this war for the Russians, really, because Germany wants Russian oil and wheat and iron. Of course the Russians *should* help us, with whatever they —'

'Send an army, you mean, to Poland?'

'Oh no, not Russian troops. Why, I've seen . . . in 1920 . . . and before that in Rumania. But supplies and munitions and things . . . perhaps airplanes. Yes, they could fly over; I have heard they can make long flights.'

That is another point about which all Poland agrees. They don't want Russian troops on Polish soil. Here old memories join with new, and priest and soldier, worker and peasant, have each of them their reasons.

'Atheists and enemies of God,' says the priest.

'We have not forgotten 1920,' says the soldier.

The workers tell you that their Socialist party, under the leadership of Pilsudski, professed Marxian revolutionary doctrines, but its action was direct and militant on national lines — the fomenting of strikes, sabotage, and revolt against foreign, especially Russian, domination. Some add that in recent times Stalin has gone further from Marxism than Pilsudski ever did.

The peasants are still religious for the most part. In addition, the basis of Polish land tenure is family ownership, whereas Russian villages under the Czar owned the land in common and allotted it to successive holders at frequent and regular intervals.

As one man the Poles believe that the presence of Russian troops would not be a temporary measure, but an end to Polish independence, for which they are ready to fight.

I talked with dozens of soldiers, from General Sikorski, former Premier and War Minister, to privates in the ranks. From them all I select three examples to complete the picture of Poland on the brink of war.

One soldier said, 'The army is Poland. In the old days of "gentry" rule, they all were trained to arms, and fought as well as governed. That is true of our leaders to-day. Pilsudski was a soldier and his successors are soldiers. Now, on the eve of war, it is not timid elderly civilians who are facing Hitler and Göring with umbrellas, but men with swords, like Smigly-Rydz and Beck, who shared their dead Leader's revolutionary "underground" activities and are familiar with crowd psychology, conducted guerrilla warfare and pitched battles, have known adversity and success, and cannot be bluffed or bullied. Poland's fate is already in the hands of the army, which must bear the responsibility for

decisions now and bear the brunt of the fighting later.'

Another soldier said, 'The trouble with the Poles is that they talk too much and always passionately believe what they are saying while they say it. Their self-confidence verges upon boasting, their courage tends toward recklessness, and their chivalrous refusal to brook an insult or leave a challenge unmet makes them quarrelsome. Amongst the masses even wedding parties rarely end without broken heads. But the basic principles of military training are discipline, coolness, and restraint. The army teaches the hot-headed Poles to control themselves and to understand that action is more important than talk.'

The third soldier said, 'You say you are always hearing the phrase, "The Poles aren't Czechs." You ask how the army interprets it. We mean that the Czechs didn't fight, and look what happened to them. Perhaps they wanted to fight, but they didn't fight. Maybe England never promised them support and France was lukewarm and Russia was an unknown quantity — whereas we are in a different position. England and France are pledged to help us, and perhaps there will be a pact to bring in Russia, too. But what I tell you is this, that if England walks out and France lies down and the Russians stay home in their mud, then *we* will fight by ourselves. Our leaders are soldiers, not politicians or professors. They won't be sold down the river or frightened by their enemies or fooled by their so-called friends.

'You say that what strikes you most in Poland is how its past is mixed up with its present, and how its history has become an integral part of its life. That is right. And history has taught us hard lessons, much harder than those of any other nation. The last ones we learned quite lately, from Munich and then from Prague. So now you know what we mean when we say, "We are Poles, not Czechs."'

UNDER THIRTY

[What are the aims, the experiences, and the perplexities of the Post-War Generation? The ATLANTIC intends to find out. Space has been reserved for the best letters written by men and women under thirty. The letters should, if possible, be compassed within 650 words, and those published will be paid for. Under special circumstances, anonymity will be preserved. — THE EDITOR]

A YOUNG NEGRO SPEAKS

Milton, Pennsylvania

To the Editor of the *Atlantic*: —

We young Afro-Americans are proud of our race. We show this daily. How? Listen and I shall tell.

During my high-school days I was once kicked out of school because I objected to spelling 'Negro' with a small n. I said then, and still do, whether speaking of one or the race, that it deserves a capital. I also objected to the absence of all Negro art, such as Paul Laurence Dunbar's poems, from our literature class.

I think a Negro who is ashamed of our wonderful folk songs is a product of our school system. Our schools do not teach us to respect all races. They do not tell us the Negro in Africa, especially in West Africa, had a well-developed civilization. Our schools merely tell our children Negroes were slaves; that Negroes came from Africa.

The very young Negro fears his greatest heritage, the Negro folk songs; he fears the white children will look upon him, as they often do, as a slave child. When our schools begin to teach that America is made up of many races, when we begin to teach that each race has contributed its share to this great whole, the United States of America, we shall have no more little Negroes hiding their faces in songbooks because they are ashamed.

The Negro is accused of being dissatisfied with being a servant. I'm glad. If the Negro can see no other future for himself than to be a servant, he, as a race, is worthless. The Negro race needs all sorts. We need doctors, lawyers, teachers, and every professional and skilled workman any race has.

I do not mean a person should neglect what he has. If you are employed as a street cleaner, then clean the street the best it's ever been cleaned. Perhaps you want to be a teacher, but are a ditch-digger. Dig the ditch the best you can. Do your best no matter what you do. Keep your objective in sight. Some day, if you choose to, you will be a good teacher.

During my high-school days (class of '37), I was employed by the NYA. I scrubbed floors, swept rooms, and so forth. Always I tried to do my best. One day I was very much honored. I was taken from the job I was doing and was set to sweeping a particular teacher's room. She thought I did my best.

I don't want to sweep floors all my life. I want to teach. Some day I'll teach. I shall be a good teacher because I will do my best.

I graduated from high school. I couldn't go to college. I went to work on the NYA. I painted benches, mowed lawns, washed windows; I did my best. My supervisors sent in good accounts of me. I was suffering from an acid-fast

infection. I went to one of the best hospitals in the East. Next week I shall go back for more treatment. One of the best doctors in the world will attend me. I did my best while in the hospital.

I found the nursing staff short-handed. I carried trays, linen, and did all I could. I didn't have to. I wanted to. I was much surprised to find the nurses and doctors thought I was unusual. They told others. Others told me.

I cite these experiences to show we young Afro-Americans are the same as others. We will, for the most part, do our best. Some of us, it is unfortunately true, will do sloppy work.

The young American Negro says: 'I'm working as a street cleaner now; some day I'll be an actor, writer, or book-keeper.' 'I'm going to be the best cook ever.' 'I've got a good boss; he wants his work done right; I'll do it right.' 'He's black, but he's got brains. Bet he'll amount to something some day.' Ability — that is what counts these days.

The most courteous youth in our high school was a black boy. He would help the teachers with their books, coats, pick paper off the floor, say 'Excuse me' if he passed in front of them, and do many kind and courteous things. He wasn't brilliant. He was, I believe, a true gentleman. It takes a gentleman to stand the jeers of your fellow students when you are trying to be courteous.

I've been in a room where he offered to pick up some bits of paper the teacher had started to pick up. The whole room gave one great 'Boo.' He picked up the paper. Of six hundred pupils, he was considered, by many, one of the politest in the school.

The young American Negro knows only the fittest survive. If the Jews are better servants they will be America's servants. However, we find Jews in all the professions — doctors, lawyers, bankers, and so forth.

We young American Negroes know the Jew is great because he is continually being persecuted. The harder a thing is to get, the more desirable it is.

We American Negroes desire a place in America's life as other races have. We desire to be playwrights, doctors, actors, bankers, and to fill whatever position we feel best suited for. We know the way is hard. We glory in getting ahead. We shall succeed. We are young America. Black, it's true, but Americans nevertheless.

Our elders failed. *We won't.*

LEWIS W. WARE

MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE

Beachmont, Massachusetts

To the Editor of the *Atlantic*: —

I bought my first race horse in 1932. I remember wishing I could train her myself.

But in those days the race track was no place for a woman. Tsk! Women who wanted to hang around race tracks in the early morning hours were certainly not ladies!

Why, for hundreds of years — in fact, ever since the first horse race — no woman had ever set foot on the ground around the barns. Not in the morning, anyway. Sometimes in the afternoon, if she were very unconventional, she would feed a lump of sugar to her horses, but she was always well chaperoned by brothers, uncles, and trainers.

Racing was an old established institution. It had no intention of changing just because a few pesky women thought it would be more fun to train their horses themselves. And in spite of the changes of the last twenty years, during which time the self-satisfied male has gradually been made to realize that women are human beings, he still considered the race track his stronghold. That was one place which no woman would ever invade!

But we gals persisted! Every morning

we arrived at our stables, much to the annoyance of all the men in general, and our trainers in particular. And carefully we observed their methods and studied the training routine. They couldn't deny us the right of looking at our property, much as they would have liked to.

Finally, after a terrific battle, we won our point. The impossible came to pass. In 1934 a woman horse trainer came into existence. Now there are about ten women training horses in various parts of the country.

Perhaps you wonder what a lady horse trainer does? I have raced horses for a living ever since the spring of 1935, when I received my first trainer's license at Washington Park in Chicago. And I can assure you that a lady trainer's life is no different from that of a gentleman trainer.

I am out at the race track every morning, rain or shine, at six o'clock — earlier in the summer. Whether I walk, gallop, or breeze my horses depends upon the condition book. This is a little book known on the race track as the horseman's Bible, which carries the races and conditions for a period of ten days.

Right after a horse runs I always walk him for a few days, then I gallop him, and then work him, thus bringing him gradually up to his next race. But when I say 'I' I do not mean, as so many people think, that I actually get on the horses and gallop them myself. There are exercise boys who do that, just as there are grooms who take care of the horses, blacksmiths who shoe them, and jockeys who ride them in their races. My job is directing the work, and paying the bills. Of course I collect the purses when there are any to collect. And when they are fewer and farther between than I think they should be, I devote many hours to worry.

Then I watch the general health of the horses. I see that they are eating well,

for a horse that doesn't eat can't run. I look after their legs, and prescribe remedies the minute I detect any signs of unsoundness. And when I enter a horse in a race I select the best available jockey to ride him.

Also, a good part of my time is spent traveling. That's one thing about being a horse trainer — you certainly see the country. I'm North in the summer, South in the winter. In fact, I move on an average of once a month, except for a four months' stay at the winter races. And where I want to race is entirely a matter of my own choice. I had my first view of the nation's Capital while racing at Bowie, and I spent my first winter under Miami's tropical sun while racing at Hialeah.

If it's possible to like and dislike one thing at the same time, in the horse business it's the overwhelming element of luck. When you're in a lucky streak — and don't let anyone tell you that 75 per cent of the horse business isn't luck, the other 25 being common sense — it seems as if you could do nothing wrong. But when you're unlucky — oh, my!

Of course, it's fun never knowing what's going to happen next, but sometimes it's very discouraging, too. It makes you feel like a helpless cork buffeted back and forth by tides over which you have no control. However, in defense of this you develop a psychology of hope. For you never know when the tide is going to turn, and when it does you're sitting on top of the world. And I might mention that the optimistic view of this attitude of hope is the byword of the whole race track.

But for someone like me who is fond of animals and the out-of-doors, and who likes to be on the move all the time, horse training is a very pleasant method of earning a living. And I'm glad that I live in a day and age where I am able to pursue my unorthodox tastes.

HAMBLA BAUER

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

NOT ACCEPTABLE

THERE is a common belief these days to the effect that our civilization makes men soft and timid. The breed of heroes is no more. Only yesterday an elderly friend of mine, T. Warrington Hunt, became so perturbed on seeing a WPA worker light a cigarette during working hours that he upset his Scotch and soda. While his valet was mopping him off, Mr. Hunt explained his views. However, as similar ideas have been expressed almost daily in newspaper accounts of hundredth-birthday interviews with persons who invariably prove to have been pioneers, I shall simply develop some of the points I made in rebuttal to Mr. Hunt's talk, for during our conversation he gave me little chance to explain my views fully.

Take the matter of courage. Time was when a man could go about his work blissfully ignorant of the existence of a Fascist point of view or of microbes. Europe could conduct its cherished quarrels without threatening to explode in his face. The advertisers had not told him of the perils of rancid coffee or bleeding gums. Even a pioneer had to face Indians only occasionally; he had not the daily prospect of meeting streptococci in the kitchen. Yet the modern American faces meals with equanimity, even pleasure, and then dashes off to a rendezvous with the pneumococcus at the movies.

These are the heroisms of common, everyday people. I wish to speak more particularly of a selected breed of heroes many thousands in number. They face not merely the perils of the average man, but in addition a host of dangers he knows nothing of. I refer to the subscribers to the publications of the various organizations whose function it is to give consumer advice. To these hardy folk a thousand perils walk where before there were but few. Having for years been a member of one or another of these fraternities, I hereby make a modest claim for recognition of what we go through.

Grandmother had two comforting theories about life. One was 'What you don't know won't hurt you'; the other, 'Everybody must

eat a peck of dirt in a lifetime.' The very first reading of one of these consumer bulletins will shatter forever this humble faith. The old creeds gone, the subscriber must face a perilous world.

For instance, I have always been fond of ketchup. For me it brings back something of my boyhood: my grandmother's kitchen, a place redolent of spices and heated vinegar while she peeled the great red tomatoes which were to become ketchup. Later, when gardens became too small for tomato growing and kitchens for preserving, I had to content myself with store ketchup. In my innocence I supposed that, by avoiding brands containing benzoate of soda, I was taking all necessary precautions. Now I discover that one laboratory has revealed as many as sixty-three worm fragments in 200 cubic centimetres of one kind of ketchup. Fortunately the one I used contained only forty-six worm fragments. My rugged grandfather would have given up ketchup; yet in the face of the recent report I have continued to put it on my hamburger — perhaps a bit less lavishly, but still ketchup.

I have seen oldsters of T. Warrington Hunt's generation refuse to eat preserves unless they were homemade; yet we who know what is really in commercial preserves still eat them. And T. Warrington Hunt calls us soft! I wonder what he would do if one evening, after eating peas, he sat down to read a bulletin which reported deadly nightshade buds in a can of the brand he had just consumed. Let him picture the torment of the waiting when every gas pain might be the warning herald of excruciating cramps. (The article described the cramps fully.) Could he have gone to bed knowing that he might wake in agony? Could he have waited a whole month until the next month's bulletin appeared saying it was all a mistake, that the nightshade was of a harmless variety?

Lest I appear too much of a hero, and appropriate laurels belonging to persons of sterner stuff, let me admit here that I did give up my subscription to one service which seemed to revel in harrowing detail. The one I now follow allows me at least a few

foods I can eat with the blissful thought that they are not composed exclusively of 'putrid animal substance.'

My real admiration is reserved, however, for persons like my friend Pennington Jones. Never robust, and reared by a widowed mother, Pennington is by nature a highly sensitive individual. To one like myself, who went fishing in boyhood, a worm, even in ketchup, is not a fearsome object. To Pennington the personality of a worm is as much a mystery as that of the giant panda.

One can therefore imagine the state of Mr. Jones's mind on the occasion when he found in his bureau drawer only shirts of a kind reported to be skimpily cut and to shrink badly. To make it worse, every one had been laundered. A cowardly man would have remained at home, but not my friend. He donned one of the proscribed garments, and attended a faculty dinner at the risk of having his shirttail creep up and out, or even of having some other subscriber to the same bulletin recognize the shirt as one rated 'not acceptable.'

I remember the pitiful state of one of my colleagues, a man whose painstaking scholarship had formed in him the habit of weighing every argument and looking at all sides of every question. A characteristic saying of his was 'A fair-minded man could never vote; there are good and bad in both parties.' Characteristically, he subscribed not merely to one set of consumer reports, but to two. Once when he needed a new fountain pen he postponed the purchase until he had full information. This worked a considerable hardship, for he needed the pen at once. At last the reports came. Picture his distress upon discovering that the pen he wanted was given an 'A' rating by one service, and by the other was classed as 'not acceptable.'

I must in all fairness report a moment of weakness on the part of Pennington Jones. On one terribly foggy night he was forced to motor back to the city to be on hand for classes in the morning. As the road was unfamiliar to him, he was becoming completely bewildered when a huge intercity bus came hurtling along, heading toward his destination. Joyfully he fell in behind it, bravely keeping up the forty-five-mile-an-hour pace which this entailed.

Suddenly the fumes from the bus warned him of his peril. From advertisements he knew that the bus company used a certain

brand of gasoline, a brand which the bulletins had warned him was heavily treated with a lead compound. Lead poisoning was cumulative, the bulletin had often assured him. Only that morning he had eaten fruit — almost certainly sprayed with a lead insecticide. Now he was every moment inhaling the fumes of leaded gasoline. In France such a product was forbidden by law; the consumers' laboratory had looked hopefully to a similar law in America. His present dilemma would, however, not wait for legislative solution. A lesser man would have dropped behind and tried to find his way through the fog unaided; would perhaps have given up, and missed his class the next morning. Not my friend — he followed the bus.

It was only at home that his courage failed. When he came to brush his teeth, he discovered that in packing he had mislaid his toothpaste. Picking up a tube of his wife's, he was about to use it when through habit he glanced at its maker's name. It was a brand rated 'not acceptable,' for it was packed in a lead tube. Pennington Jones had taken all the risks he dared that day. He put down the tube of paste, and went to bed *without brushing his teeth.*

ERNEST EARNEST

GETTING WELL

I HAVE known for a long while that I am only whistling in the dark when I tell my solicitous friends, as I have a way of doing, that I am not afraid to live out here in this big house alone. I go on whistling, not because I mind being thought a coward, which is quite all right, but because I am one, and do mind being thought queer, which would be embarrassing all round; and we usually end with the mutual assumption that there is really nothing to be afraid of.

'And then of course there are the servants . . . ' I murmur indefinitely, with an all-too-definite picture in my mind of Joe pursuing his night life across the fields and Lucy going sleepily to bed all those doors and rooms and corridors away.

'And of course you have the dogs,' they murmur back reassuringly. 'Let's see; how many of them are there now?' And when I tell them only one, only Jubby now, they look him over as if they thought I still had dog enough. How long would it take, I wonder,

for an evildoer or evil-intender to find out that most of that bulk is composed of friendliness? Somebody once suggested that we tie a bell to his tail, so that when burglars came his enthusiastic greeting might wag us at least a warning. But say what you please, a hundred and thirty pounds of Great Dane is a wonderful advertisement of the security of home, and I hate to think how hard it would be to have to go on trying to feel safe without Jubby.

I have had to face the prospect too nearly these last days, for Lucy and I have been nursing him through pneumonia, a dramatically sudden and violent attack; and now that he is definitely 'on the mend' I find myself meditating a good deal on the nature of joy. It is a subject about which I should know more than most, having had in my life an unusual allotment of the various forms of happiness, and I flatter myself I am becoming more intimately acquainted with it as these forms assume the more intimate character that goes with their diminishing proportions.

There seems to be so little difference, subjectively considered, between one joy and another. The discrepancy in the delights we propose to ourselves when we are young and the ones we manage to hold on to in the teeth of the 'robber years' lies in the objects we consider at different epochs to be worthy of such vibrations and not in the vibrations themselves. This is naturally a personal point of view, but it is, as I have indicated, the opinion of an expert. Sir Philip Sidney said something in a sonnet about being 'long with love acquainted,' and this has been my case with joy. How well I know the rustle of those wings! Once it was Pearls from Samarkand that they denoted; now it is Jubby getting well, but inwardly the message is the same.

The night we saw him through his crisis was appropriately but inconveniently stormy. The little white-breasted birds that every year choose the vines over the windows as a wayside inn on their journey to wherever they are going at this season were quite literally upset by the whipping of the ivy branches and kept dashing themselves against the window glass and fluttering up and down it like distracted skaters on the ice. They seemed more than ever on this anxious night to 'mean something,' but, however ill-omened they might be, I did not want to see their fatal presages fulfilled on them,

so I sent Lucy to call the cats into the kitchen and leave them there, cuddled as is their silly wont under a perfectly cold stove, while we sat in the parlor and kept the fire blazing. For that is where the sufferer lay, of course, in his accustomed place before the hearth with extra rugs and cushions about and beneath him. Joe had given him his tablets for the night and poured the final bottle of milk and whiskey down his throat, and so departed, leaving Lucy and me alone for the long watches.

'If you'll 'scuse me, Miss Annie, but you rubs the misery back into him if'n you don't take your hand up every time,' criticized my assistant, who watched my efforts with the camphorated oil and made involuntary motions with her own hands in the right direction every time I moved mine in the wrong.

'All right, Lucy, you take it over,' I consented sadly, thinking it made little difference who did the rubbing, or whether right or wrong — so low poor Jubby seemed. The doctor had said he didn't have much of a chance, his years being so against him. But, as doctors often do, he must have underestimated something — love, perhaps, or Lucy, for before the night was over she had rubbed her patient back to life.

'Miss Annie,' she called, 'he's up and walkin'. Mus' I let him go out?'

And out he went for a long drink of water from the fountain on the terrace, looking in the light from the windows like some fantastic and foolish beast out of a child's picture book, with his front legs through the sleeves of a padded pyjama jacket and a leopard skin from a worn and ancient coat dangling over his shoulders. Even the wind and the rain could hardly hurt one so miraculously restored, it seemed to me, and of course neither he nor Lucy could see any reason why he should not go as usual to the fountain if he wanted a drink. The fact that he could neither stand nor stagger all the day before was already erased from their consciousness — as it deserved to be. I was the only one of the three of us who remembered it, which made me feel somehow unworthy. Even Joe when he came in the early dawn to be greeted by a risen Jubby didn't seem particularly surprised.

Was sick . . . is well. . . . What a pleasant conjugation, and how naturally accepted by those who are not grammarians!

ANNE GOODWIN WINSLOW



The Atlantic Serial

Rogue Male

by—GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD

CHAPTERS XVIII TO XXVIII

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Rogue Male . . .

is a novel written in the first person. It is the confession of an English aristocrat with a name internationally known, who appears to have taken little part in politics or society, but to have earned his notoriety through exploration and big-game hunting. 'Lest what I write,' he says, 'should ever, by accident or intention, become public property, I will not mention who I am.'

He became obsessed with the idea of stalking the biggest game of all, a European dictator. He does not tell us whether he went east or west from Poland, his starting point. He was caught when his telescopic sight was coming on to the target.

His claim that he never actually meant to shoot was, naturally enough, considered incredible by the secret police; indeed he himself shows a reticence about his motives which cannot altogether be accounted for by his very English reserve. He was questioned and tortured until some official recognized the name on his passport, and his story of a sporting stalk seemed possible, if unlikely. But his captors dared not let him go; they threw him over a cliff and staged his death to look like an accident.

He fell, however, into a patch of bog, and by skillful woodcraft convinced the search parties that he had been drowned. While they were looking for his body he escaped to England.

He visited his attorney, whom he calls Saul, to settle up his affairs and give warning that he intended to disappear for a number of years; but as soon as he left Saul's office he was recognized and followed. He escaped from his hunters in the London underground railways, but was compelled to kill one of them — an episode that lies very heavy on his conscience.

Now that the police were after him (though without knowing his identity) as well as the foreign secret service, he had to vanish completely; he secretly made his

way to Dorset, and went to ground in the midst of a thick hedge through which ran a disused and forgotten lane. He writes that he first discovered this lane while giving some woman 'the first sight and feeling of the land that was to be her home.' He says little else about her except, oddly, to protest that he was not in love with her.

He burrowed into the sandstone to make himself a shelter and lived securely in the lane for several weeks; he had as companion a cat, Asmodeus, which had also run wild and taken to the cover of the great hedge. Bored by the monotony of his life and worried by his conscience, he tried to clarify his thoughts in writing the first part of the present journal.

The second part, written in the same place but under circumstances of extreme danger and discomfort, tells how the police came to know that he was in Dorset, how he tricked them into believing he had escaped to a port, and how, on the way back to his den, he was shot at and slightly wounded by a foreign agent whom he knows as Major Quive-Smith, and who is evidently an experienced hunter himself. He discovers that the major has rented the shooting over the neighboring farms, and thus has the right to walk about with a gun and to fire it.

Cornered, helpless, unsure of himself and his motives, he retires underground and disguises the mouth of his den so that Quive-Smith will not notice it. Day after day he remains motionless in the filth and damp, hoping that the major will lose patience and go away. 'I will not kill,' he writes. 'To hide I am ashamed. So I endure without object.'

To-day begins the third part of the journal. . . .

With each twelve months of the Atlantic
**THREE GREAT BOOKS
OF THE YEAR**

ROGUE MALE

BY GEOFFREY HOUSEHOLD

XVIII

I HAVE a use for this record, so I finish it. By God, it is good to write with a purpose, good to grudge the time I must spend on it, instead of whining, as it were, up my own sleeve! This will not, I think, be a pleasant task, nor dispassionate. But I can and must be frank.

I remained in my burrow for eleven days—for a week because it was a week, for two more days to prove to myself that I was not being unduly impatient, and still two more for good measure. Eleven days seemed ample to persuade Quive-Smith that I had either died in cover or left the district; I was entitled to find out whether he had gone. Asmodeus's behavior suggested that he had. For the middle days the cat had been coming and going in dignified leisure, his ears upright and the hair along his back unruffled. For the last three I had not seen him at all. His delicate movements made the reason perfectly clear; he could not endure the dirt any longer.

Without climbing a tree or exposing myself on open ground—both too dangerous—it was impossible to spy on Quive-Smith during the day; so I decided to look for him after nightfall in the farm itself. Inch by inch I emerged from the blackberry bush and crawled on my stomach to the hedge at the top of Pat's pasture, then through it and over the close turf of the down to much the same point that the major himself had occupied. It was cold and very dark,

with a slight ground mist; I was quite safe so long as I moved slowly and avoided the lanes. It was very heaven to be out on the grass and breathing. A blazing summer noon couldn't have given me more pleasure than that foul November night.

There was little wind. The countryside was utterly silent except for the drip of the trees. I could see the lights in Patachon's farm and smell the sweet wood smoke from his chimneys. I dropped down into the vale and made my way to the farm along the edge of the open road, coming to the back of the north wing across an orchard. Here there was a high wall with the sloping roof of a farm building above it. From the top of the gable I should have the yard and the whole front of the house under observation. I didn't dare to enter the yard itself. Even if the dogs neither heard nor saw me, the southwest wind, such as it was, would have carried my scent to them.

The wall was built of flints and easily climbed, but there was a gap of two feet between the top of the wall and the lower edge of the slates which gave me trouble. A rotten iron gutter ran below the slates, and it was difficult to reach the roof without momentarily putting some weight on this gutter. Eventually I got up by way of a stout iron bracket and the gable end.

I lay on the slates with my head over the coping. I could see right into the living room of the farm—a peaceful

and depressing sight. Quive-Smith was playing chess with Patachon's small daughter. I was surprised to see him sitting so carelessly before a lighted window with the blind up, and all black Dorset outside; but then I understood that, as always, I had underrated him. The clever devil knew that he was safe with his head nearly touching that of the child across the board. He was teaching her the game. I saw him laugh and shake his head and show her some move she should have made.

It was a bitter shock to find him still there. The eleven days had seemed an eternity to me. To him they were just eleven days; it was even possible, I thought, that he had been enjoying himself. My disappointment turned to fury. It was the first time in the whole of this business that I lost my temper. I lay on that roof picking at the moss on the stone coping, and cursing Quive-Smith, his country, his party, and his boss in a white-hot silence. I blasted him to hell, him and his friend and Patachon and their manservants and maidservants. If my thoughts had hit those walls, I should have created a massacre that would have done credit to a plunging Jehovah called from eternity by the anathemas of a thousand infuriated priests.

It shook me out of my melancholy, that blazing, silent orgasm of rage. I didn't stop to think that I had brought all this on myself, nor to consider that if I had actually been transported to that living room I should have shown a damned silly punctilious courtesy to the lot of them. I let myself go. I don't remember anything like it since I enjoyed — certainly, enjoyed — speechless temper at the age of seven.

I was brought back to reality by a fit of shivering. I had sweated with wrath and the perspiration was cooling in the night air. It's strange that I noticed it, for all my clothes were as permanently wet as those of a seaman in the days of sail. There must be a special virtue in

sweat, cooling one spiritually as well as physically.

I watched the living room until the child went to bed. Then the major joined Patachon in front of the fire, and Patachon's wife entered with two huge china mugs of cider. All three settled down to newspapers. There was nothing more to be learned.

I sidled towards the gable end, the weight of my body taken on shoulder and thigh, left hand on the coping and right hand testing the slates ahead lest one should be loose. I was concerned, God help me, with the noise of a single slate sliding down the roof into the gutter! A few feet from the end there was a subsidence beneath me. The slates sagged. I seemed to be floating on a heavy liquid that moulded itself to me, suddenly became brittle, and crashed to the floor of the barn. For an instant I swung from the coping and then that too gave way. Five feet of stone tile, a solid expanse of slate, and I myself roared down on to a pile of iron drinking troughs. It sounded like the collapse of a foundry.

I found later that I had reopened the wound in my shoulder and suffered various cuts and bruises, but at the time I was only shaken. I picked myself up from that welter of ironwork and dashed to the open door of the barn. I didn't go through it. Quive-Smith had thrown up the window of the living room, and his long legs were already over the sill. My only thought was that he mustn't know I was still in this part of the country. The dogs started barking and jumping against their chains. Patachon opened the front door and stumped over the threshold, flashlight in hand.

I retreated into the barn and dived under the drinking troughs. They were ranged side by side, so that there was room for me between any two, and covered by the slates and rubble from the roof. Quive-Smith and the farmer entered the barn immediately afterwards.

'Damn un!' stormed Patachon, ob-

serving the damage. 'Tis that beggarin' murderer aafter my cheeses. Over t' barn and down to dairy! I knew 'e was a-stealin' of 'em. Over t' barn and down to dairy!'

I don't suppose he had lost an ounce, but farmers always suspect something is being stolen from them; there are so many things to steal. Quive-Smith obligingly agreed with me.

'Oh, I don't think there was anybody on the roof,' he said. 'Look at that!'

I knew what he was pointing at — a broken beam. It hadn't even broken with a crack. It had just given way like a sponge of wood dust.

'Deathwatch beetle,' said the major. 'I met the same thing in the East Riding, by Jove! Tithe barn it was. Poor chap broke his bloody neck!'

It didn't ring quite true, but it was a gallant attempt at the right manner.

'Rotted!' agreed Patachon in a disgusted tone. 'Damn un, 'e's rotted!'

'Got to happen sometime,' answered Quive-Smith. 'We ought to be thankful no one was hurt.'

'Bin there three 'underd years,' grumbled Patachon, 'and 'e 'as to come beggarin' down on *our* 'eads!'

'Oh, well,' the major said cheerfully, 'I'll turn to in the morning and give you a hand. Nothing to be done now! Nothing at all!'

I had had a bad fright. I was hurt and shaken. So I went without thinking to Safety — not to the form of safety adapted to the case, but to Safety in general. And that meant my burrow — darkness, rest, freedom from pursuit. I hadn't a thought — any more than, I suppose, the fox has such a thought — that the earth might mean death. Under the influence of panic when Quive-Smith shot me I had behaved in the same way, but then it was excusable. I didn't know what the devil I was up against, and to seek general Safety was as sound as any other move. To seek it now was simply a reflex action.

I took, of course, the most beautiful

and cunning route; the animal could be trusted to perform that futility to perfection. I went through water and through sheep. I waited in cover to be sure there was no pursuit. I knew finally and definitely that there was no pursuit; that I was alone on the down above my lane. Then I covered the last lap with extreme caution and entered my burrow with attention to every dead leaf and every blade of grass.

XIX

All the next day I remained underground, congratulating myself on my good fortune. The stench and dirt were revolting, but I persuaded myself that in three or four days I could open my door and cleanse and dry the den, and Asmodeus would come back and we could live peacefully until it was safe for me to hang around the ports and get out of the country. My hands were all right again, showing little deformity. The left eye was still queer, but the right was so foul, filmy, and bloodshot that the difference between them was no longer remarkable. A shave and haircut were all I needed, and then I could pass anywhere as a criminal who had just celebrated his release from prison with a two-day binge.

After nightfall I heard some activity in the lane, and sat with my ear to the ventilator. I couldn't translate the noises. There were two men, but they did not speak to each other. I expect they whispered, but owing to the curve of the little tunnel I could not hear so slight a sound. Something heavy was being moved, and once I heard a thud against the door. My thoughts played with the idea of a man trap, a log perhaps that would fall on my head; they were certainly building something in the run-way I had once used. Since I used it no longer I felt very clever and secure. I told myself that I was disappointed, merely disappointed, for they would wait another week or two for the result of

their trap and I should have to stay underground.

All the time, as I now see, I was conscious of extreme terror and my heart was beating as if I had been running for my life. Only by an effort did I stop myself from talking aloud. I am very clever, I was saying to myself over and over again. They'll find themselves run in for murder, I said, if they catch somebody else. And then the terror came up in my throat, for there was silence in the lane and little bits of earth were falling down my bolt hole into the inner chamber.

I lay between the two dens, watching the trickle of earth and listening to the quick strokes of a chopper. A man, as I thought, jumped or fell into the hole, and a wave of rubble rolled down to the bottom. I reached for my knife, and waited. He's at my mercy, I said; I can make what terms I like. I was obsessed with the idea of talking, not killing. A reasonable man, I told myself. He'll see sense. He plays chess.

There was no further sound, none at all. The man had stuck in the hole or died. I crept up the slope of foul earth and lay on my back, poking an ash pole up the chimney as far as the twist. It didn't meet the body I expected; it met a hard obstruction. I withdrew myself as far as I could, for fear of some trap or explosive, and poked harder. The thing felt solid with a smooth under-surface. I lit a candle and examined it. It was the sawn end of a tree trunk which had been jammed into my hole.

I crawled to the door and pushed against it; nothing moved. Then I felt a sense of panic with which was mingled relief that the end had come at last. I intended to rush out and let them shoot. A quick death, merited. I took the axe that had hollowed out the sandstone and drove it between the planks of the door. It turned. I ripped off the planks. On the far side of them was an iron plate. It rang hollow except in the centre. They had jammed it in place with a balk

of timber, the other end of which rested against the opposite bank of the lane.

I don't know what happened to me then. When I heard Quive-Smith's voice I was lying on the bag with my head on my arms, pretending to myself that I was thinking things out. I was controlled, but my ears were drumming and my skin oozing cold sweat. I suppose that if one sits on hysteria long enough and hard enough one loses consciousness. Something has to give way, and if the mind won't the body must.

Quive-Smith was saying: 'Can you hear me?'

I pulled myself together and sloshed a handful of water over my head. There was no point in keeping silence; he must have heard me battering on the iron. The only thing to do was to answer him and play for time.

'Yes,' I said, 'I can hear you.'

'Are you badly wounded?'

Damn him for asking that question then! I should have found it very useful later if I could have persuaded them that I was suffering from a neglected wound and incapable. As it was, I answered the truth:—

'Nothing much. You hit a whiskey flask with a leather jacket behind it.'

He muttered something that I could not hear. He was speaking with his mouth close to the ventilation hole. If he jerked his head, the voice was lost.

I asked him how he had found me. He explained that he had gone straight from the barn to the lane on the off chance that I had been responsible for the broken roof and that he might see me returning to my mysterious hiding place.

'Simple,' he said, 'so simple that I was very much afraid that it was what you meant me to do.'

I told him that I had never attempted to kill him, that I could have done it a dozen times if I had wished.

'I supposed so,' he replied. 'But I counted on your leaving me alone. You would only have exchanged me for

the police, and it was obviously wiser to persuade me that you had gone. You did, as a matter of fact.'

His voice had a weary harshness. He must have been in fear of his life all the time that he was at the farm. A braver man and a cleverer than I am, but without — I was going to write 'ethics.' But God knows what right I have to claim any! I have neither cruelty nor ambition, I think; but that is the only difference between Quive-Smith and myself.

'Couldn't you give me a cleaner death than this?' I asked.

'My dear fellow, I don't want you to die at all,' he said; 'not now. I am so glad you had the sense not to break out while I was sealing you up. This position has taken me by surprise as well as you. I can't promise you anything, but your death seems wholly unnecessary.'

'The only alternative is the zoo,' I answered.

He laughed at this for a nervous, uncontrollable moment. Lord, he must have been relieved to know where I was!

'Nothing so drastic,' he said. 'I'm afraid you wouldn't survive in captivity. No, if they take my advice, I shall be ordered to return you to your position and friends.'

'On what condition?'

'Trifling — but we needn't go into that yet. Now, how are you off for food?'

'Reasonably well, thank you.'

'No little delicacies I can bring you from the farm?'

I nearly lost my temper at this. The man's voice had just the right touch of concern; there was but the tiniest shade of irony to tell me that he was thoroughly enjoying his own acting. He would have brought me anything I asked, I have no doubt. For the cat-and-mouse act to be subtle enough to please his taste, it had to be hardly distinguishable from genuine kindness.

'I think not,' I answered.

'All right. But there's no need for you to suffer any more.'

'Look here!' I said. 'You won't get

any more out of me than your police did, and you can't stay here indefinitely. So why not get it over?'

'I can stay here for months,' he answered quietly. 'Months, you understand. I and my friend are going to study the habits and diet of the badger. The large piece of timber which is holding your door is for us to sit on. The bush placed in front of your door is a hide for the camera, and there will shortly be a camera in it. I'm afraid all these preparations are wasted since nobody ever comes into the lane. But if anyone should — well, all he will see is my friend or myself engaged in the harmless study of the life story of the badger. We might even get a nice young man with a microphone and have him tell the children what Bertie the Brock keeps under his tail.'

I called him a damned fool, and told him that the whole countryside would be consumed with curiosity — that all their doings would be public property in twenty-four hours.

'I doubt it,' he answered. 'Nobody at the farm pays any attention to my innocent rambles. Sometimes I go out with a gun, sometimes not. Sometimes on foot, sometimes in the car. Why should they guess I am always in this lane? They have never seen you. They won't see me. As for my assistant, he has no connection with me at all. He is staying in Chideock and his landlady thinks he is a night watchman at Bridport. He isn't as careful in making his way here as I should like. But we can't expect a paid agent to have our experience, can we, my dear fellow?'

This 'dear fellow' of his infuriated me. I am ashamed to remember that I rammed my axe against the door in anger.

'How about that?' I asked.

'It makes surprisingly little noise,' he said coolly.

It did, even in my closed space. He explained that there were felt and plywood over the iron.

'And if you think it out,' he added, 'what would happen if anyone did hear you? That disagreeable peasant who owns the field over your head, for example? You would compel me to remove the pair of you, and to arrange the bodies to show murder and suicide.'

It was true enough — so true, at any rate, that there was little object in pointing out that he couldn't get at me without running a grave risk himself. He held the only firearm and all the cards. He could foresee a more or less satisfactory outcome if he killed me; but if I killed him I could foresee nothing but murder on my conscience, and death or disgrace eventually at the hands of the service to which he belonged. Psychologically I was at his mercy. My mind cowered.

'We must stop talking now,' he said. 'No conversation in daylight will be our rule. I shall be on duty from 10 A.M. to 8 P.M., and we shall talk during the last couple of hours. My assistant will be on duty the rest of the time. Now, let me make the position perfectly clear. I cannot, I expect, prevent you from forcing your way out over the top of the door. But if you do, you'll be shot before you can shoot, and closed up again in your cosy home. Your back door is very thoroughly blocked, and if we hear you working we shall cut off your air. So be careful, my dear fellow, and don't lose heart! Quite calm — that's the watchword. Your release is certain.'

XX

The new man sat quite still. I imagined his figure as a silhouette thrown against the darkness of the door. I had only seen him at a distance. I thought of him as dark and thick, as a contrast to Quive-Smith, who was fair and tall. I was quite wrong.

All the time that I crouched at the ventilator, my mind had been drifting over the wildest images of escape, enveloping them, rejecting them, concen-

trating finally upon the two practical schemes. The first, as Quive-Smith had suggested, was to cut a passage diagonally upwards over the top of the door. I took one of my long spits and drove it through the red earth. So far as I could tell, it passed over the top of their plate; but the knowledge was useless. As he had said, if I stuck out my head I should be shot — and, by the tone of his voice, I knew he did not mean killed, but deliberately crippled. The final breakthrough was bound to be so noisy that the watcher would have ample warning.

The second, and far more likely, way of escape was by the bolt hole. They hadn't caged me so neatly as they thought. Their tree trunk had not blocked the whole length of my tunnel; only its vertical section between the surface and the twist. The passage quarried through the sandstone was open. All I had to do was to cut a new passage through the earth, and surely I could work at that so silently that not a sound would be heard outside.

The air was foul, for the draft between ventilator and bolt hole no longer existed. The carbon dioxide that I breathed out collected between my shoulders and the working surface. My energy steadily diminished. I cleared a foot of clay and broken sandstone, and then had to return to the ventilator to breathe. On the next shift I cleared six inches; on the next three; on the next, again three. But I faded out before I reached the ventilator.

I came to after an unknown lapse of time. In the original den there was plenty of air so long as I did not work at anything too long or too fast. The ventilator was a passage some four feet long and curving down from the bank to the side of the den. It had a diameter large enough for Asmodeus to go in and out, but so small that I was always amazed he could.

It seemed to me at the time that I kept a remarkable control over myself. I concentrated on breathing in and out by the

ventilator, forcing my mind to remain blank, to stay in that state where all activity is inhibited by shock and it is freed to wander through space obsessed by trivialities. I felt that I was, to use a horrid phrase, captain of my soul. I had hardly been tested. The only periods, I suspect, when a man feels captain of his soul are those when he has not the slightest need of such an organ.

For short intervals, separated by lengthy halts to breathe, I worked at the old chimney. There was no space to swing or thrust, nowhere to put the earth that fell. It was like trying to burrow through a sand hill, impossible to breathe, impossible to remove the debris. I could have obtained more air by boring another hole through to the lane (though it wouldn't have done me much good in the inner chamber), but I dared not give them a direct view into the burrow. The one strength of my position was that they could never see what I was doing.

The day passed quickly. Time drags only when one is thinking fast, and all my mental processes were slowed down. I was lying by the ventilator when night fell and Quive-Smith wished me a cheerful good-evening.

'Everything has gone splendidly,' he said. 'Splendidly! We'll have you out of there in an hour. Free to go home, free to live on that lovely estate of yours, free to do anything you like. I'm very glad, my dear fellow. I have a great respect for you, you know.'

I replied that I doubted his respect, that I knew him to be a good party man.

'I am,' he agreed. 'But I can admire such an individualist as you. What I respect in you is that you have no need of any law but your own. You're prepared to rule, or to be suppressed, but you won't obey. You are able to deal with your own conscience.'

'I am not. But I see what you mean,' I said.

'You must be! A man in your position to commit what you described in the sub-

sequent proceedings as a sporting stalk! And then calmly pitching a spy on the live rail at the Aldwych!'

I kept silence. I didn't know where this was leading. I hated the philosophy he was ascribing to me; it was a travesty of the truth.

'I'm not blaming you in the least for defending yourself,' he went on. 'The man was worthless, and got in your way. What other result could there have been? I should be disappointed — really, I mean it — to find a lot of sloppy scruples in such an anarchical aristocrat as you.'

'That's your morality rather than mine,' I answered.

'My dear fellow!' he protested. 'There's all the difference in the world! It's the mass that we are out to discipline and educate. If an individual interferes, certainly we crush him; but for the sake of the mass — of the state, shall I say? You, you don't give a damn for the state. You obey your own taste and your own laws.'

'That's true enough,' I admitted. 'But I have respect for the rights of other individuals.'

'Of course. But none at all for the nation. Admit it now, my dear fellow — you could get along perfectly well without any state!'

'Yes, damn you!' I answered angrily — I hated his pseudo-Socratic cross-examination. 'Without the shameless politicians who run this country or the incompetent idiots who would like to, or your blasted spotlight Cæsars.'

'There's no point in being rude,' he laughed. 'Limelight has just the same effect on the emotional public as Westminster Abbey and a sovereign's escort — and it's a lot cheaper. But I'm glad you have grown out of these rather childish allegiances, because we shan't have any difficulty in coming to terms.'

I asked him what his terms were. He pushed a paper down the ventilator with a stick. I collected it, also with a stick.

'Just sign that, and you are free,' he

said. 'There is only one serious restriction. You must undertake not to leave England. We leave you at complete liberty in your own country. But if you attempt to reach the Continent, this will begin all over again and we shall show no mercy. I think you'll admit that, after what you did, it's a reasonable condition.'

I asked him for a light. I wasn't going to use up candles and oxygen. He poked his torch down the hole without hesitation. He knew by this time that he could force me to give it back.

The form they wished me to sign was lengthy but simple. It was a confession that on the -th August I had attempted to assassinate the great man, that I had undertaken this with the knowledge (they didn't quite dare to write 'approval') of the British Government, and that I had been released without any punishment on condition that I remained in England. The document was signed by their chief of police, by witnesses, and by a London notary public attesting my signature, although it did not then exist. He was, to judge by his address, quite a reputable notary, too.

It was a good torch, and I employed it for the next quarter of an hour in getting order into my excavations. Then I gave it back to him, together with his paper. There was no object in showing indignation.

'I wouldn't try to persuade you,' he said, 'if you had the usual bourgeois nationalism. A man of your type would rather be a martyr. But since you don't believe in anything but yourself, why not sign?'

I told him that I cared for public opinion.

'Public opinion? Well, we shouldn't publish this document unless there was imminent danger of war, and your government was acting its usual morality play. And from what I know of the English public's temper in time of crisis, they would probably make you a popular hero.'

'They possibly would,' I answered. 'But I don't sign lies.'

'Now, now, no heroics!' he begged me in his blasted patronizing manner. 'You're a good Englishman, and you know very well that truth is always relative. Sincerity is what matters.'

I lay no stress on the great physical weariness and discomfort to which I was subject. They gave him an enormous advantage over me in intellectual power, but he had that in any case. He drove me gently from one untenable position to another. He might have been a kindly doctor investigating a moral delinquent.

'I think,' he said at last, 'that it would make it a lot easier for both of us if you told me why you attempted assassination.'

'I told your people long ago,' I retorted impatiently. 'I wanted to see whether it was possible, and his death would be no great loss to the world.'

'You did, then, intend to shoot,' he said, accepting my statement quite naturally. 'I couldn't really help you, you see, till you had admitted that.'

I perceived that I had given myself away to him and to myself. Of course I had intended to shoot.

Their methods of interrogation are devastating to the muddle-minded — 90 per cent of us, whatever class we belong to. It's easy to make a man confess the lies he tells to himself; it's far harder to make him confess the truth. And when by their technique the truth has been dragged from him, he is so plastic and demoralized that he will accept any interpretation the questioner chooses to put upon it. The process is equally immoral and effective whether used by psychoanalysts or secret police. They make us see our own motives, and in the horror of that exposure we are ready to confess to any enormity.

I had been through all this before, of course, but at the hands of much coarser and less intelligent examiners than Quive-Smith. Physical torture merely increased my obstinacy. I was so occu-

pied in proving to myself that my spirit was superior to my body that the problem of whether my intelligence had not been hopelessly overshadowed by my emotions did not arise.

'Yes,' I admitted. 'I intended to shoot.'

'But why?' he asked. 'Surely political assassination settles nothing?'

'It has settled a good deal in history,' I said.

'I see. A matter of high policy, then?'

'If you wish.'

'Then you must have talked it over with someone?'

'No. I went alone, on my own responsibility.'

'For the sake of your country?'

'Mine and others.'

'Then, even though your government knew nothing about you, you were acting in a sense on their behalf?'

'I don't admit that,' I said, seeing where he was heading.

'My dear fellow!' he sighed. 'Now, you say you don't sign lies. Let me make your mind a little clearer, and you will see that I don't want you to. You have a number of friends in the Foreign Office, haven't you?'

'Yes.'

'You sometimes give them an informal report on your return from trips abroad. I don't mean that you are an agent. But if you had any interesting impressions, you would pass them to the right man over the lunch table?'

'I have done so,' I admitted.

'Then suppose you had succeeded and we had hushed the assassination up, would you have informed your friends that he was dead?'

'Yes, I expect so.'

'You do, you see, consider yourself a servant of the state,' he said.

'Not in this matter.'

'Oh dear, oh dear!' complained Quive-Smith patiently. 'A man with your experience of foreign society shouldn't have this English dislike of reasonable conver-

sation. It is precisely and only in a matter of such importance that you consider yourself a servant of the state. In your daily routine you do not. You are an individualist obeying his own laws. Yet you admit that in this matter you acted for reasons of state and that you intended to inform the state.'

I see now that he was destroying a great deal of nonsense in my mind. It was possibly that, more than anything else, which gave me the sense of wriggling at the end of a hook.

'But I did not act at the orders of the state,' I said.

'I haven't asked you to sign your name to that. "With the knowledge of the government" is the phrase. That wouldn't be a lie at all. We needn't even stick to those words. "With the knowledge of my friends" — how would that be?'

'It isn't true.'

'I'm not suggesting you were paid. No, I think you undertook this, as you say, more or less in a sporting spirit.'

'I told you so,' I said.

'Ah, yes. But a sporting assassination! Now, really, you wouldn't believe it yourself, you know.'

'Why not?' I asked furiously.

'Because it is incredible. I want to know why you hate us to such a degree that you were ready to murder the head of the state. What were your motives?'

'Political.'

'But you have admitted that you care nothing for politics, and I believe you implicitly. Perhaps we mean the same thing. Shall we say that your motives were patriotic?'

'They were not,' I answered.

'My dear fellow!' he protested. 'But they were certainly not personal!'

Not personal! But what else could they be? He had made me see myself. No man would do what I did unless he were cold-drawn by grief and rage, consecrated by his own anger to do justice where no other hand could reach.

XXI

I left the ventilator, and lay down with my head at the entrance to the inner chamber; it was the most privacy I could attain. His voice murmured on, grew angry. I didn't care. I was fighting against the self-knowledge he had forced upon me. At last he was silent, and I surrendered to misery.

I will try to write of this calmly. I think that now I can. I am a man who has only loved once, and did not know it till she was dead. Perhaps that is not quite correct. I loved with all my heart, but had little self-consciousness about it — not, at any rate, compared to the ecstasy and glory which love meant to her. I was too disciplined, too civilized. I loved her as a Chinese mandarin might love a flower, beautiful in itself, unquestionably beautiful to live with.

When I heard of her death, I did not weep. I told myself immediately that love was an illusion. I grieved that so exquisite a work of nature had been destroyed. I grieved, in my conscious mind, with that same sorrow which I would have felt had my house, in which fifteen generations have lived, been burned — an irreparable, terrible sense of loss, transcending any injury, but no hot, human grief.

That, I say, is what I thought I felt. He who has learned not to intrude his emotions upon his fellows has also learned not to intrude them upon himself.

When I went to Poland I considered that I was taking quite a conventional course: to go out and kill something in rough country in order to forget my troubles. I had not admitted what I meant to kill. I did not admit it till Quive-Smith destroyed all possible self-deception.

She was so swift and sensitive. She could do no other than make a generous cause her own. Impulsive, spiritual, intelligent, all at such energy that she seemed to glow. A boy who saw such

things told me that sometimes there was a visible halo of light around her. To that I am insensible. But, as I remember her, life extended beyond her body; neither touch nor sight could quite surely say, Here she begins and here she ends. Her skin was not a surface; it was an indefinite glory of the palest rose and orange that chose to mould itself to those tense limbs.

She knew, I suppose, that in our mixture of impulse and intelligence we were alike. Her emotions governed her brain; though she would support her side with devastating logic, logic had nothing to do with her devotion. I should never have suspected that of myself, yet it is true. I have never taken sides, never leaped wholeheartedly into one scale or the other; nor do I realize disappointments, provided they are severe, until the occasion is long past. Yet I am ruled by my emotions, though I murder them at birth.

They caught her and shot her. Shot her. Reasons of state. Yes, I know, but surely the preservation of such an individual is why we suffer, why we fight, why we endure this life. Causes? Politics? Religion? But the object of them is to produce such a woman — or man, if you will. To put her, her, against a wall — there is no cause that justifies an act so satanic. It is the life of such a creature which justifies any cause she chooses to adopt. What other standard have we? In all history has any man become a Christian because he was convinced by the Athanasian Creed? But how many millions have been convinced by the life of a single saint!

I declared war upon the men who could commit such sacrilege, and above all upon the man who has given them their creed. How ridiculous that one person should declare war upon a nation! That was another reason why I hid from myself what I was doing. My war was a futile cause to me, to be smiled at sympathetically just as I used to smile at her enthusiasms. Yet in fact

my war is anything but futile. Its cost in lives and human suffering is low. Seek out and destroy the main body of the enemy — and I should have destroyed it, but for a change of wind.

I realized that since the day I was caught I had been defeated only by the loneliness and uncertainty. How could I admit to myself that I, the mandarin, was declaring war; that I, the unfeeling lover, had been so moved by the death of my beloved? That I, the civilized, scrupulous sportsman was behaving like an ice-cream merchant with a knife?

Well, all that, as I lay in the silence of my temporary grave, was at last admitted. And so I passed to a spiritual offensive.

I do not know how long I lay there. I passed in thought over great distances of geographical space, over all the movement of my attack and retreat, but there was no activity in myself or the outer world by which time could be measured. At last I was roused by the perceptible rising of the water.

I thought at first that there must be heavy rain outside, and thrust a stick down my two drains to clear them. It met hard obstructions. Of course they had found and plugged the holes. That added to my discomfort — if anything could — but put me in no danger. The water would leak out under the door as soon as it rose to the height of the sill.

I spoke through the ventilator almost with gayety. I was buoyed up by a feeling of light-heartedness, much the same, I suppose, as that of a penitent after confession. I knew why I was in my burrow. I felt that what I had done had been worth-while.

'Anyone there?' I asked.

Quive-Smith answered me. The night had passed, and the other man had come and gone.

'You will merely succeed in giving me pneumonia, my dear fellow,' I said.

'Delirium,' he replied, 'won't change your handwriting.'

It was the first time that I had an-

noyed him; he let me hear the cruelty in his voice.

I started to burrow again, hoping with my new courage to get to the surface sometime after nightfall. But it was not courage that needed multiplying; it was oxygen. I had to leave the work at shorter and shorter intervals, and to allow a greater margin of safety than before. If I fainted with my head in the sea of mud on which my sleeping bag was floating, it would be all over.

When I could do no more, I rolled up the useless bag and spread a layer of tins on top of the bundle. On them I sat, crouched forward with the nape of my neck against the roof and my elbows on my knees. It was uncomfortable, but the only alternative was to lie full length in the water. That would have made me no wetter than I was, but a lot colder. I shivered continuously. Nevertheless the temperature in the den must have been well above that of the outside air. The poets are wrong when they describe the grave as cold.

In the evening, the third since my imprisonment, Quive-Smith tried to make me talk, but I would not. At last I heard his colleague take over from him. The major wished me good-night, and regretted that I should force him to increase my discomfort. I didn't understand what he meant. After that there was silence — a silence more complete than any I had experienced. Even at night and buried, my ears caught faint noises of bird and beast.

The night dragged on and on. I began to suffer from hallucinations. I remember wondering how she had got in, and begging her to be careful. I was afraid that when she left they might think she was I, and shoot. Even while I was off my head I could not conceive that anyone would hurt her for being herself.

They passed, those dreams. It was the growing effort of breathing which drove them away. I was desperate for air. I couldn't make the man hear me when I spoke, so I hammered lightly on the door.

A shaft of light showed at the angle of the ventilator. Quive-Smith had blocked it before he left.

'Stop that!' ordered a low voice.

'I thought it was still night,' I answered idiotically.

I meant that I wouldn't have hammered on the door if I had known it was already morning. I didn't want some innocent person involved in the reckoning.

'I have orders to break in and shoot if you make a noise,' he said stolidly.

He had the flat voice of a policeman in the witness box. From that, and from the major's description of him, I was pretty sure of his type. He wasn't in this service from ambition and love of the game itself, both of which undoubtedly counted with Quive-Smith; he was a paid hand.

I told him that I was a wealthy man and that if I escaped I could make him independent for life.

'Stop that!' he answered again.

I thought of pushing a fat bank note up the ventilator, but it was too dangerous to let him know I had money; he would have been in a position to force unlimited sums from me and give nothing in return.

'All right,' I said. 'I won't talk any more. But I want you to know that when they let me out I won't forget any little favors you can show me.'

He made no answer, but he didn't put back the obstruction.

I hunched my rolled bag towards the ventilator, and sat down with my face pressed to it. The sun was shining outside. I could not see it, but in the curve of that imitation rabbit hole the deep orange crystals of the sandstone were glowing with light. There was an illusion of warmth and space. The twenty-four inches of sand, being so close to and directly under my eyes, lost perspective. The minute irregularities became sandhills, and the tunnel a desert with the sun still bathing the horizon and the dark clouds of the khamsin gathering overhead.

XXII

My watch had stopped, but I think it must have been nearly midday before Quive-Smith came on duty. The first I heard of him was a shot — so close that I was sure he had potted something in the lane — and then the laughter of both men.

When dusk fell, he began to examine me for the fourth time. His approach was cordial and ingenious. He gave me a précis of the news in the morning paper, then talked of football, and so came round to his boyhood; he had, he said, been educated in England.

His personal reminiscences were frank, though he implied a lot more than he said. His mother had been an English governess. She felt socially inferior and morally superior to his father — a horrid combination — and had tried to make her son a good little Briton by waving the Union Jack and driving in patriotism with the back of a hairbrush — with the natural result that his affection for his mother's country never rose higher than the point of contact. He gave away nothing about his father; I gathered that he was some obscure baron. When, later, I came to know Quive-Smith's real name I remembered that his restless family had a habit of marrying odd foreign women, and had consequently been cold-shouldered by their peers. He had a Syrian for his grandmother. That accounted for the almost feminine delicacy of his bone structure.

He led me on to talk of my own boyhood, but as soon as I felt myself affected by the confidential atmosphere that he was creating I dried up. I knew his methods by now. There was never a chance that he could make me sign that paper of his, but he could — and it shows amazing technique — still make me wonder whether I wasn't being absurdly quixotic in refusing.

He threatened to block the ventilator again if I did not talk to him. I retorted that if he stuffed up that hole I should

die; and, in case that should encourage him, I added that asphyxiation appeared to be a pleasanter death than any I could give myself.

I had not, in fact, the least thought of committing suicide now that I knew the object of my existence. Even during the first lost and hopeless days suicide had only been a possibility to which I gave as much consideration as to each of a dozen other plans. One does not, I think, kill oneself without a definite desire to do so. It is hardly ever an act to which a man must key himself up; it is a temptation which he must struggle against. I have more than my fair share of mental diseases, but the black suicidal depression doesn't happen to be one of them.

He laughed and said he would give me all the air I wanted, all the air I wanted through the sort of filter that was fit for me. He dropped his English manner completely. It cheered me enormously to know that I was getting on his nerves.

I heard him push some bulky object into the hole and ram it well down towards the curve. I didn't much care. I knew from experience that there was enough air stored in the burrow and leaking under the door to keep me going for many hours.

I remained quiet, considering whether or not to pull the obstruction down into the burrow. I could get at it. The tunnel was the shape of my arm bent at the elbow, and half as long again. But the risk was serious. If he caught and fixed my left arm as it groped upwards, he would not thereafter be so dainty in his methods of cross-examination.

I poked with a stick, and found the thing to be soft and stiff. I advanced my fingers inch by inch until they brushed against it and I snatched back my hand. I had touched, as I thought, an arrangement of wires and teeth, but before my arm was fairly out of the tunnel I realized what it really was. The simultaneous mixture of terror and relief and anger made me violently sick.

Taking Asmodeus's head in my hand,

I drew his remains into the den. Poor old boy, he had been shot at close quarters full in the chest. It was my fault. People who sat quietly in the lane were, in his only experience, friendly and had bully beef. He had been shot as he confidently sat up to watch them.

Quive-Smith cackled with laughter and told me that, really, I had only myself to blame; that he hoped I wouldn't be too proud to talk to him on the following evening. He couldn't, of course, have known that Asmodeus was my cat, but he had quite correctly calculated that I should draw his obstruction into the den and that I could never push it back. By God, if he had known the atmosphere I lived in he would never have thought that a dead cat could make it any worse!

When the other man had come on duty, I set about disentangling my stiffened body. While moving my roll of bedding I felt that I could not have stood up even if there had been headroom. I knelt in the mud with my hands on the doorsill and tried to straighten my legs. My impression had been right—I had set with my knees two feet from my chin.

I had no need of sleep, for I had passed some hours of every twenty-four half dozing, half unconscious. During the night I worked on my body, and when at last it consented to open up I supported myself on toes and hands and practised those exercises which, I believe, business men are ordered to perform before breakfast. I stopped shivering and ate a solid meal of oatmeal moistened with whiskey. I wished that I had thought of limited exercise before, but I had been demoralized by the filth of my condition. And there was no object for physical strength.

It seems ridiculous to say that, by shooting Asmodeus, Quive-Smith condemned himself to death; it was in a sense so slight a crime. Patachon would have shot the old poacher without hesitation. I should have grieved for him no less, but admitted Patachon's right. In

the same way I admitted Quive-Smith's right to shoot me by the stream. I can neither defend nor explain the effect that the shooting of this cat had upon me. It released me. I had intended to escape by the chimney without bloodshed. From then on all my plans were directed towards a swift and deadly break-through into the lane. I was at last able to admit that all my schemes for escaping without violence were impossible. The only practical method was to kill the man on duty before, not after, I started digging.

The ventilator was my only means of physical contact with them. I meditated a number of ingenious decoys to persuade the major to thrust his arm down the hole. This idea of a trap had not, apparently, occurred to him, and it might work. But it would do me no good, I decided, even if I caught Quive-Smith. You can't kill a man quickly with only his arm to work on. He would yell for help.

To kill him through the ventilator? Well, there was only one way, and that was to straighten the curve so that I could shoot a missile up the tunnel. It was useless to poke at him with some improvised spear; to give instantaneous death I had to deliver a heavy weapon at a high initial velocity.

An iron spit at once suggested itself as the weapon. It would fly true for the short range of some three and a half feet between the point and his head; but it could not be fired from my catapult or from any rearrangement of its rubber. I had to have something in the nature of a bow.

None of my bits of wood served. There was no room to handle an ash pole of such length that its bending would have the necessary force. A bow proper, or any method of propulsion by the resiliency of wood, was excluded. Bent steel or twisted rope might have done, but I had neither.

I looked over my full and empty tins in the hope of finding another source of

power. Some were on my rolled sleeping bag; some under Asmodeus. I had laid his carcass on a platform of tins. A last tribute of sentimentality. He could never have endured the mud. When I laid my hand on him I realized that in his body was power. He could take his own revenge.

I skinned Asmodeus and cut his hide into strips. I have always been interested in the mechanics of obsolete weapons, and guilty of boring my friends by maintaining the supremacy of the Roman artillery over any other up to the Napoleonic Wars. The engine that I now contrived was an extremely crude model of a hand-drawn ballista. I remember considering something of the sort for use on rabbits, but, since I felt more sympathy for them alive than dead, I never constructed it.

I made a square frame of which the uprights were two bricks and the horizontal bars two stout billets of ash fitting into roughly scraped grooves at the tops and bottoms of the bricks. Parallel to the bricks and on the inner side of them I twisted two columns of rawhide. Through the centre of each column was driven a long peg, which projected three or four inches beyond the brick. A wide thong was attached to the tips of the two pegs as a bowstring joins the ends of a bow. The twisting and shrinkage of the strips of hide held the whole frame rigid and forced the pegs hard back against the bricks.

On the farther side of the bricks and lashed to them by square lashings was a strip of wood from a packing case, in the centre of which I cut a semi-circular aperture. The method of firing the ballista was to lie on my back with my feet on the outer edges of this wooden strip. The point of the spit passed through, and was supported by, the aperture; the ring of the spit was gripped in the centre of the thong by the thumb and forefinger of the right hand. Thus, by the pull between hand and feet the pegs were drawn towards my chest against the tor-

sion of the columns of hide. When the spit was discharged, the pegs thudded back on the bricks, which were padded with cloth at the point of contact.

XXIII

By the time I had made the machine it was morning, or later, and Quive-Smith was on duty again. I dared not practise for fear of noise, so I slept as best I could and waited for the evening examination. I intended to be polite, for I wanted information about the major's assistant. I hadn't the faintest idea what to do with him, — I was in no position to take prisoners, — but I had a feeling that he might be more useful to me alive than dead.

At the hour when Pat, Patachon, and their laborers had all retired to their respective firesides, Quive-Smith opened the conversation. After we had exchanged a few guarded commonplaces, he said: —

'You're unreasonable, really unreasonable. I'm surprised at a man of your sense enduring such conditions!'

I noticed a touch of impatience in his voice. He had begun to realize that watching badgers in a damp lane on November evenings was not an amusement that anyone would want to carry on for long. He must have wished that he had never thought of that invaluable confession.

'I can endure them,' I answered. 'You're the man who is suffering for nothing. I've come to the conclusion that if I sign that document of yours you'll never have occasion to publish it. There isn't going to be any war. So it doesn't matter whether I sign or not.'

I thought that would appeal to him as a piece of British casuistry: to deny that I was uncomfortable, but to produce a hypocritical justification for getting more comfort. It was a textbook illustration good enough to take in the foreigner.

As a matter of fact no Englishman that

I know would have signed his bloody paper — refusing partly from honor but chiefly from sheer obstinacy. He's a neurotic creature, the modern John Bull, when compared to the beef-and-ale yeoman of a hundred years ago; but he has lost none of great-grandfather's pig-headedness.

'You're perfectly right, my dear fellow,' said Quive-Smith. 'Your signature is a mere necessary formality. The thing will probably stay at the bottom of the archives till the end of time.'

'Yes, but look here!' I answered. 'I trust you not to talk. I don't know who you are, but you must be pretty high up in your service and have a sense of responsibility. But what about this other fellow? I may lay myself open to blackmail, or he may change sides.'

'He doesn't know who you are,' replied Quive-Smith.

'How can I be sure of that?'

'Oh, use your head, man!' he answered contemptuously — I was pleased that his voice no longer had its usual note of ironical but genuine respect. 'Is it likely? He doesn't even know who I am, let alone you. This morning he did his best to find out. I expect you tried to bribe him.'

'Is he English?' I asked.

'No, Swiss. A people, my dear fellow, of quite extraordinary stupidity and immorality. A very rare combination which only a long experience of democratic government could have produced. A Swiss agent is the perfect type of Shakespeare's Second Murderer.'

I refrained from the obvious gibe. Nobody could cast Quive-Smith as a First Murderer. He was definitely in the employing class.

I wanted to keep him talking, so that he wouldn't insist on my signing his document immediately. I asked him what was the matter with democracy.

He read me a long lecture, which degenerated into a philippic against the British Empire. I slipped in a provocative word here and there to encourage

him. He hated us like hell, considered us (he said it himself) as the Goths must have considered the Roman Empire, a corrupt bunch of moralizing luxury lovers who could only hold their frontiers by exploiting — and that inefficiently — the enormous wealth and the suffering millions behind them. In fact it was a speech that would have gone equally well in the mouth of his boss's opposite number on the other side of Poland.

He even had the effrontery to invite me to join the winning side. He said that they needed in all countries natural leaders like myself; I had only to sign, and bygones would be bygones, and I should be given every chance to satisfy my will to power. I didn't tell him that natural leaders don't have any will to power. He wouldn't have understood what I meant.

I dare say he was sincere. I should have been a very useful tool, completely in their power. When you find an agitator who hasn't suffered poverty, it's sound to ask whether he has ever been in my position and what he has done that our police don't know and a foreign police do.

'I'll sign in the morning,' I said.

'Why not now?' he answered. 'Why suffer another night?'

I asked him where on earth I could go. I told him that before I could be let loose on the public he would have to bring me clothes, and, when I was decently dressed, take me to his farm to wash. All that couldn't be done at a moment's notice without arousing a lot of curiosity.

'I see your point,' he said. 'Yes, I'll bring you clothes in the morning.'

'And get that Swiss of yours away before we talk! That's what worries me most. I don't trust him a yard.'

'My dear fellow,' he protested, 'I wish you would give me credit for some discretion.'

When the Second Murderer had come on duty and settled down for the night, I started to practise with the ballista,

stuffing a coat into my end of the ventilator so that the thud of the pegs could not be heard. The strips of hide had shrunk into even tighter coils. It was a more powerful weapon than I needed, and the devil to pull; I had to use both hands, my left on the shaft of the spit, my right gripping the ring, held horizontally so that it did not catch as it flew through the aperture. At a range of four feet the spit drilled clean through two tins of tomatoes and buried itself six inches in the earth. I shot it off less than a dozen times, for the construction was none too strong.

I unstopped the ventilator and fanned for an hour to change the air. Heaven knows whether it really made any difference, but it was worth trying since my next task was to persuade the Swiss to shut up his end of the ventilator, and keep it shut while I straightened the tunnel.

I began moaning and mumbling to shake his nerves a bit. When he ordered me to stop it, I said I would if he told me the time.

'Half-past two,' he answered sulkily.

I stayed quiet for another hour, and then went off my head again — sobs and maniac laughter and appeals to him to let me out. He endured my noises with annoying patience (hoping perhaps for that hypothetical reward) and compelled me to such a show of hysteria before he plugged the hole that I managed to get on my own nerves into the bargain. My acting was good enough to be a genuine release for my feelings.

The straightening of the tunnel was easy and quite silent. I dug with my knife and gathered the earth handful by handful. At intervals I let off some moans to discourage him from removing the plug. The curve vanished, and in its place was an empty hollow, like a rabbit's nest, with two mouths. His plug was a piece of sacking. I opened out its folds on my side without disturbing its position. I could breathe without difficulty and hear every sound.

I arranged my rolled sleeping bag under my shoulder blades, and lay on my back in the mud with the engine presented and the spit fitted to the thong. I had to be ready to fire the moment that a man's head appeared at the hole. The removal of the sacking would give me time to draw, and if anyone looked into the hole and noticed that its shape had been altered, that would be the last thing he ever noticed.

The light of morning gleamed through the folds. I waited. I waited, it seemed to me, till long after midday before Quive-Smith arrived. As a matter of fact, he was early — if, that is, he usually came at 10 A.M.

For the first time I could hear all their conversation. At that hour in the morning they spoke in low voices and as little as possible.

'He has gone mad, sir,' reported the Swiss stolidly.

'Oh, I don't expect so,' answered Quive-Smith. 'He's just avoiding the crisis. He'll soon be calm.'

'Usual time to-night, sir?'

'If not, I will let you know. Your woman has been warned that you may be leaving?'

'Yes, sir.'

I heard his heavy steps splashing off through the mud. All this time I was lying on my back and staring at the hole.

XXIV

I cannot remember the slightest effort in drawing the ballista. There was a flash of light as Quive-Smith withdrew the plug. I started, and that slight jerk of my muscles seemed to pull the thong. Immediately afterwards his head appeared. I noticed the surprise in his eyes, but by that time I think he was dead. The spit took him square above the nose. He looked, when he vanished, as if someone had screwed a ring into his forehead.

I hacked at my end of the ventilator until it was large enough to receive my

body, then crawled inside and burst through into the lane with a drive of head and shoulders. Quive-Smith was lying on his back watching me. I had my thumbs on his windpipe before I realized what had happened. The foot of spit that projected behind his skull was holding up his head in a most lifelike manner. He hadn't brought any spare clothes. Perhaps he didn't intend me to live after he had my signature; perhaps he didn't believe that I would sign. The latter is the more charitable thought. He had a loaded revolver in his pocket, but that is no proof one way or the other.

I burned that scandalous document, then stretched myself and peered through the hedge over the once-familiar fields. Pat was nowhere in sight, and his cows were grazing peacefully. Patachon was talking to his shepherd on the down. It was a damp November day, windless, sunless, of so soft a neutrality that, coming to it straight from disinterment, I couldn't tell whether the temperature was ten or thirty degrees above freezing point. By Quive-Smith's watch it was only eleven. I ate his lunch. Behold, Sisera lay dead and the nail was in his temples.

I destroyed his screen of bushes and his camera (thorough though I knew him to be, I was surprised that he had really set the scene for his badger watching) and folded up the heavy motor rug which kept him warm. Then I shifted the log that was jammed between both banks of the lane, and opened the door of the burrow. The stench was appalling. I had been out only half an hour, but that was enough for me to notice, as if it had been created by another person, the atmosphere in which I had been living.

Boiling some muddy water on the Primus, I sponged my body — a gesture rather than a wash. It was heaven to feel dry and warm when I had changed into his clothes. He had heavy whipcord riding breeches, a short fur-lined shooting coat — Central European rather than English, but the ideal garment for

his job — over his tweeds, and a fleeced-lined trench coat over the lot.

When I was dressed I went through his papers. He had the party and identity documents of his own nation, with his real name on them. He also had a British passport. It was not in the name of Quive-Smith. He had put on that name and character for this particular job. His occupation was given as Company Director, almost as noncommittal as Author. Anybody can qualify for either description, as every police-court magistrate knows; but they look impressive.

In a belt round his waist I found £200 in gold and a second passport. It had twice been extended by obscure consulates, but had neither stamps nor visas on it, showing that it had never yet been used for travel. That this passport was his own private affair was a fair assumption. The photograph showed his face and hair darkened with stain, and without a moustache. If I were in Quive-Smith's game, I should take care to have a similar passport; should he have a difference of opinion with his employers, he could disappear completely and find a home in a very pleasant little Latin country.

I held up any definite plans until after I should have interviewed the Swiss, but when I cut my hair and shaved I left myself a moustache exactly like the major's and brushed my hair, as his, straight back from the forehead. The name and identity of the Company Director might suit me very well.

I removed what was left of Asmodeus and buried him in the lane where he had lived and hunted, with a tin of beef to carry him through till he learned the movements of game over his new ground. I plugged the ragged hole made by my escape with my old clothes, my bedding, and earth, and took from the den my money and the exercise book that contained the first two parts of this journal. Then I replaced the original door, and laid the iron plate against the bank of the

lane, covering it with earth and debris. When the nettles and bracken grow up in the spring — and thick they will grow on that turned earth — there will be no trace of any of us.

The tracks in the mud told me that the Swiss always entered and left by the top of the lane. There was no mistaking the prints left by Quive-Smith's abnormally small feet. I had been compelled to keep my own shoes, and the heels of his stockings were lumps under my soles.

I squatted against the bank in the darkest section of the lane and waited. I heard the fellow a quarter of a mile away. He was moving reasonably quietly where the lanes were dry, but had no patience with mud.

When he was a few paces from me I flashed Quive-Smith's torch on his face and ordered him to put his hands up. I have never seen such a badly frightened man. From his point of view he had been held up in the middle of nowhere by a maniac with a considerable grudge against him.

I made him keep his face to the hedge while I removed his documents, his pistol, and his trouser buttons. I had read of that trick, but never seen it done. It's effective. A man with his trousers round his ankles is not only hindered; his morale is destroyed.

He carried a passport on him. I suppose those chaps always do. A glance at the first page showed me that his name was Müller, that he was naturalized English, and that he was a hotel porter. He was a big man, fair-haired, with a fair moustache waxed to points. He looked as if he had modeled himself upon some ex-N.C.O. of the Corps of Commissioners.

'Is he dead?' the man stammered.

I told him to turn round and look, keeping him covered while I flashed the light on Quive-Smith's naked body. Then I put him back with his face to the hedge. He was shaking with fear and cold. His legs pulsed. I had thrown his imagination out of control.

He kept on saying: 'What . . . what . . . what . . .'

He meant, I think, to ask what I was going to do to him.

'Who am I?' I asked.

'I don't know.'

'Think again, Müller!'

I placed the cold flat of my knife against his naked thighs. God knows what he thought it was, or what he imagined I meant to do! He collapsed on the ground, whimpering. I wanted him to keep his clothes reasonably clean, so I picked him up by one ear, and propped him against the hawthorn alongside Quive-Smith.

'Who am I?' I asked again.

'The Aldwych . . . the . . . the police wanted you.'

'Who is the man whose clothes I am wearing?'

'Number 43. I never met him before this job. I know him as Major Quive-Smith.'

'Why didn't Major Quive-Smith hand me over to the police?'

'He said you were one of his agents, and you knew too much.'

That sounded a true piece of Quive-Smith ingenuity; it explained to a simple intelligence why it was necessary to put me out of the way, and why they were working independently of the police; it also ensured the Second Murderer's zealous coöperation.

'What were you going to do with my body that night?'

'I don't know,' he sobbed. 'I swear I don't know. I had orders to stay in the car every night until I heard a shot and then to join him.'

'Where did you get the iron plate?'

'I had it cut in Bridport on the morning when he first discovered you were here. I used to meet him outside the farm for orders.'

'How many years have you worked in hotels?'

'Ten years. Two as night porter.'

'Any dependents?'

'A wife and two tiny tots, sir,' he said.

I suspected he was lying; there was a whine in his voice. And I felt that, considering the varied human material at their disposal, his employers wouldn't have chosen a family man for a job of indefinite duration.

'Where does your wife think you are?'

'Relieving at — at Torquay.'

'Does she believe that?'

'Yes.'

'She doesn't mind getting no letters from you?'

'No.'

'Doesn't it ever occur to her that you might be with another woman?'

'No.'

'Careful, Müller!' I said.

I merely raised the revolver to the level of his eyes. He shrieked that he had been lying. He pawed the air with his right hand as if he could catch the bullet in its flight. The wretched fellow feared death as he would a ghost. I admit that death is a horrid visitor, but surely distinguished? Even a man going to the gallows feels that he should receive the guest with some attempt at dignity.

'From whom do you take your orders?' I asked.

'The hotel manager.'

'No one else?'

'Nobody else, I swear!'

'What hotel?'

He gave me the name of the hotel and its manager. I won't repeat it here. It ought to be above suspicion, but for that reason, if no other, I have little doubt that our people suspect it. If they don't, they have only to check which of them in the last week of October lost a night porter who never returned.

'What crime did you commit?' I asked.

It was obvious that they had some hold on him in order to make of him so obedient and unquestioning a tool. Night porters, in my experience, are remarkable for their brusque independence.

'Assault,' he muttered, evidently ashamed of himself.

'How?'

'She invited me to her room — at least I thought she did. I shouldn't have done it. I know that. But I was going off duty. And then — then I went for her a bit rough-like. I thought she'd been leading me on, you see. And she screamed and the manager and her father came in. She looked a child. I thought I'd taken leave of my senses. She had just been laughing at me friendly, sir, when she came in of an evening, and I'd thought . . . I could have sworn that . . .'

'I know what you thought,' I said. 'Why didn't they charge you?'

'For the sake of the hotel, sir. The manager hushed it up.'

'And they didn't sack you?'

'No. The manager made me sign a confession and they all witnessed it.'

'So you have done what you were told ever since?'

'Yes.'

'Why didn't you get another job?'

'They wouldn't give me any references, sir, and I don't blame them.'

He was genuinely ashamed. He had come out of the realms of a panic-stricken imagination as soon as he was reminded of the real trouble of his everyday life. They had a double grip on the poor devil. They had not only ensured his obedience, but shattered his self-respect.

'Don't you see that they framed you?' I asked.

I was sure of it. Any really competent little bitch of seventeen could have managed those enigmatic smiles and performed that disconcerting change from temptress to horrified child.

'I'd like to believe it, sir,' he said, shaking his head.

No wonder Quive-Smith was exasperated by him!

XXV

I myself became a human being again. Müller might, for all I knew, have been a gangster of the most savage, and therefore cowardly, type. I had to break him

down. It wasn't only acting; I should have killed him without hesitation if he hadn't proved useful. But I was almost as relieved as he when I could lay brutality aside. I told him to pull up his pants, and gave him a bit of string to hold them, and a cigarette. I kept the revolver in sight, of course.

'They know you at the farm?' I asked.

'Yes. I drove the major over there.'

'In what capacity? His servant?'

'Yes. He told them I was taking my own holiday on the coast.'

'Have you been at the farm since?'

'Once. I had lunch there the day that . . . that . . .'

'That you buried me alive.'

'Oh, sir! If only I had known!' he cried. 'I thought you were one of them — honest, I did! I didn't care if they murdered each other. It was a case of the more the merrier, if you see what I mean.'

'You seem to be pretty sure now that I'm not one of them,' I said.

'I know you're not. A gentleman like you wouldn't be against his own country.'

Wouldn't he? I don't know. I distrust patriotism; the reasonable man can find little in these days that is worth dying for. But dying against — there's enough iniquity in Europe to carry the most urbane or decadent into battle.

However, I saw what use Müller had been to his employers. A night porter must be able to sum up his customers on mighty little evidence, especially when they arrive without any baggage.

I explained to him that he might consider himself out of danger so long as his nerve did not fail; he was going down to the farm to tell Patachon that Quive-Smith had been called back to London, to pack up his things, and to take them away in the car.

Quive-Smith had almost certainly warned his hosts that he might be off any day, so the plan was not outrageously daring. Müller had the right air of authority; with the rug over his arm, he

looked trained and respectable in spite of being somewhat muddied. He was dressed in such a way that he could pass for a night watchman in Chideock or a manservant on a holiday: a stout tweed suit, an old pull-over of suède, and a stiff white collar.

The chief risk was that Müller, when he found himself at the farm, would decide that his late employers were more to be feared than I. That point I put to him with the utmost frankness. I told him that if he wasn't out of the house in a quarter of an hour I should come and fetch him and claim to be the major's brother. I also told him that he was useful to me just so long as nobody knew the major was dead, and that the moment when his usefulness ceased, whether in ten minutes or two weeks, would be his last.

'But if you are loyal to me for the next few days,' I added, 'you can forget that matter of criminal assault. I'll give you money to go abroad and never see your late employers again. They'll leave you in peace. You're no further use to them, and you don't know enough to be worth following. So there you are! Give me away, and I'll kill you! Play straight with me, and there's a new life open to you wherever you want to lead it!'

There were a good many holes in the argument, but he was in no state for analytical thinking. He was deeply impressed and became maudlin with relief. Quive-Smith was quite right about him; he was the perfect Second Murderer. He attached himself with doglike simplicity and asked only to be allowed to obey.

He took the major's head while I took his heels, and we moved cautiously down into the road that ran along the foot of the hill. There, thankfully and immediately, we dropped our white burden in the ditch. I saw the sweat burst out on the back of Müller's thick neck as soon as he was convinced that we had not been seen.

At the five-bar gate where Patachon's private track swung across the home paddock to the farm, we stopped. I told Müller that I should wait for him there, and should enter the car when he got out to open the gate. I gave him Quive-Smith's keys and I gave him a story to tell. The major was dining with friends in Bridport. He had learned that he had to go abroad at once. His address for forwarding letters was Barclay's Bank, Cairo. I knew from a letter in his pocket that he kept an account with a branch of Barclay's — and Cairo is a complicated town through which to trace a man's passage.

'But what will I do if they don't believe me?' he asked.

'Of course they'll believe you,' I answered. 'Why the devil shouldn't they?'

I was none too sure of that, but his best chance of success was to show the utmost confidence.

I gave him a pound to tip the girl who had made the major's bed — if there were such a girl — and another which he was to hand to Mrs. Patachon for her daughter's savings bank.

'You know the little daughter?' I asked.

'Yes — Marjorie.'

'Give Marjorie a message from Major Quive-Smith: that she must remember not to bring her queen out too soon.'

'I don't understand,' he said.

'All the better. Explain to her that you don't understand what it means. But she will, and she'll laugh. Tell her not to bring her queen out too soon.'

It was perfectly safe advice to give a beginner at chess, and it would establish Müller's *bona fides*.

I let him cross the paddock and go round the corner of the barns into the yard; then I followed to watch, so far as possible, over my fate. This time there was no need to take extreme pains to hide myself — the dogs had an excuse to bark. I squatted behind a tree whence I could see the front door.

Mrs. Patachon received the caller with surprise but no hesitation. She shut the door and there was no movement for five minutes — which I spent wishing I had cut the telephone wires. Then an oil lamp was lit in an upper room, and I saw Müller pass back and forth across the window. He came out with a suitcase in his hand, followed by Patachon with a gun case, Marjorie with the rug, and Mrs. Patachon with a packet of sandwiches. The whole party were chattering gayly — except Müller, who was far too glum — and sending messages to the major. They entered the stable to watch Müller load and start the car, and I ran back to the gate.

‘Where to, sir?’ asked Müller.

In spite of his grip on the wheel his elbows were quivering like the gills of a fish — partly from reaction and partly from fear that his usefulness had come to an end. I was sorry to appear again as a ruthless killer, but there was a risk that he might try to rush the gate.

I told him to drive to Liverpool and to go easy with the traffic laws. Southampton was too close, and London too full of eyes. We picked up Quive-Smith and put him in the back of the car under a rug.

My plans were straightening out. I was sure that nobody would call at the farm until letters and telegrams had remained a week or more without reply; anxiety would have to be very strong before any of the major’s subordinates or superiors — if he had any superiors — ventured to intrude upon his discreet movements. When they did, and visited the lane, they could take their choice of three theories: that I had got away with Quive-Smith and Müller hard on my heels; that I had bribed the pair of them to let me go; or that they had killed me and in some way aroused the curiosity of the police.

We stopped for petrol at Bristol and Shrewsbury. On the way I wired an assortment of ironmongery to Quive-Smith, and dropped him into the Severn.

I have no regrets. Reluctantly, belatedly, but finally I have taken on the mentality of war; and I risk for myself a death as violent and unpleasant as any he could wish for me.

XXVI

We reached Liverpool in time for an early breakfast. The town was in its vilest mood, and I was glad that the major had dressed himself for exposure to the elements. A northeast wind gathered the soot, dust, and paper from the empty streets, iced them, and flung them into the Mersey. The sullen yellow water gave a more bitter impression of cold than the blue of the Arctic. I felt greater confidence in the wretched Müller. On such a morning it was inconceivable that anyone would betray a person who intended to have him out of England before nightfall.

Putting up at a hotel, we breakfasted in our room. While Müller dropped off to sleep in front of the fire, I spent a couple of hours practising the signature on Quive-Smith’s passport. For convenience I still write of him and think of him as Quive-Smith, though there is possibly no one but myself, Saul, Müller, and a handful of people in a corner of Dorset who ever knew him by that name. The signature I practised and the identity I had taken were those of his normal British self — the nondescript company director.

This English name of his was signed in a spidery, flowing script which, with a fine nib, was not at all difficult to imitate. My forgery wouldn’t have taken in a bank manager, but it was good enough for an embarkation form or a customs declaration — especially since it would be written on cheap paper with an office pen.

The passport photograph was not very like me, but near enough. No shipping clerk would question it. The common type of Quive-Smith and myself is manifestly respectable and responsible.

I woke up Müller and offered him a drink. He turned out to be a teetotaler — another advantage, I suppose, to his employers. I took him with me to the bathroom, and while I washed off the accumulated filth of weeks (keeping the revolver handy on the soap dish) I made him sit on the lavatory seat and read me the shipping news.

We had ships sailing that afternoon for New York; for the West Indies; for Gibraltar and Mediterranean ports; for Madeira and South America; for Tangier and the East. All countries for which I needed a visa were excluded, and all voyages longer than a week. Gibraltar, Madeira, and Tangier remained — and Madeira was a dead end, to be avoided if possible.

I wondered what Quive-Smith would have done had he found himself saddled with Müller as the only witness to murder or bribery. The answer was not far to seek. He would have pushed Müller overboard on the night before reaching port, and concealed his absence. That seemed an admirable solution. It would convince them that I really was Quive-Smith — in case they doubted it — and would put an end to all search for the hotel porter.

This, then, was my plan; but instead of pushing him overboard wherever was convenient, I had to push him overboard within reach of land and with the means of landing. There were two places where that could be done — the point near the mouth of the Tagus where the Cintra Hills come down to the sea, and Cape St. Vincent.

I sent for a barber to give me a decent haircut, and, as soon as we left the hotel, bought a monocle which disguised, or rather emphasized and accounted for, the glassy stare of my left eye. Then I led Müller round the shipping offices — an eccentric holiday-maker and his secretary-valet. I asked as many silly questions as a Cook's tourist; I hoped, I said, to be able to wave to an old friend who lived in Portugal. The shipping

clerks explained to me patiently that it depended on where my friend lived, that Portugal had a long seaboard, and that in any case the largest of handkerchiefs could not be seen at a couple of miles. They were surprisingly polite; they must, after all, spend much more time instructing prospective customers in elementary geography than in selling them tickets.

I found out what I wanted to know. The Gibraltar ship wouldn't do; it passed the Tagus in the morning, and Cape St. Vincent shortly after sunset. The Tangier ship, a slow old tub with one class only, was more suitable. It passed the Tagus between 9 P.M. and midnight.

I had a look at the plans. The steering gear was aft on the main deck, and between its housing and the stern was the usual small and private space where lovers park their chairs, provided they can endure the exaggerated motion of the ship. There would be no room for lovers on this trip. The company director and his companion were going to spread themselves and their deck chairs over that space, and be rude to anyone who disturbed their privacy.

We booked two adjoining staterooms with a bath between, and then did our shopping. I provided Müller and myself with bags and necessities for the voyage. I bought a collapsible rubber boat with a bicycle pump to inflate it, a pair of strong paddles in two pieces, and a hundred feet of light rope, all packed in a large suitcase. Müller, naturally, thought the boat was for my own escape; I didn't disillusion him. Then I put the car into storage for a year, and we went on board.

Down St. George's Channel and across the Bay I had no need to trouble myself about Müller's whereabouts. He had never made an ocean voyage. The ship was a mere 8000 tons. The sea was very rough. I occupied the vile heaving rail at the stern, just to establish a squatter's rights over it, and after a painful morning acquired my sea legs. It was a bless-

ing to have none of my usual biliousness. I was free to spend my time eating, drinking, and washing; I needed as much of the three pleasures as the ship provided.

On the third night out from Liverpool we passed Finisterra, and awoke to a pale blue world with a rapidly falling swell; the gray-green hills of Portugal lay along the eastern horizon. I routed my secretary-valet out of bed, and fed him breakfast. Then we occupied the two deck chairs at the stern. I spread out my rugs and legs as awkwardly as possible, and through my monocle stared offensively at anyone who dared to pick his way over them. None of the passengers showed the slightest desire to join us.

In the late afternoon I gave Müller a couple of lemonades to brace his courage, and asked him what he wanted to do. Would he rather return to London and report himself, or vanish off the face of the earth? He was very nervous at the thought of not going back to tell what he knew of Quive-Smith's death.

'You'll have to explain why you told so many lies at the farm,' I reminded him. 'The family can bear witness to the fact that you were alone. Nothing prevented you from telephoning to London.'

He promptly begged me to take him with me wherever I was going. The man was quite incapable of standing by himself. As soon as he was detached from one support, he began waving frantic tentacles in the hope of gripping another.

I replied that I couldn't take him; he would have to disappear by his own individual route.

'They would follow me!' he cried. 'I would never have any peace, sir.'

'They won't follow you if they think you are dead,' I said.

I explained to him the plan: that he and the rubber boat were to be thrown overboard when we were a couple of miles from shore, and that I would give him £500 with which to start a new life.

He brightened up a bit at the thought of money, but then was appalled by the difficulties facing him when he reached the shore.

Well, there was one thing Müller could be trusted to do: to follow orders. So I gave them.

'Your clothes will be in the boat,' I said. 'When you land, put them on. Rip the boat to bits, and hide them under a rock. Walk to Cascaes and take the electric train to Lisbon. Don't go to a hotel. Spend the night where you do not have to register. If you drink a coffee at any of the bars in the centre of the town, I expect some way of passing a discreet and pleasant night will occur to you. In the morning go to the docks to meet an imaginary friend who is arriving by ship. Pass back again through the customs as if you came off the boat and get your passport stamped. Then buy yourself a visa and a ticket for any country you want to visit, and leave at once by another ship.'

'But suppose they look for me in Lisbon,' he said. 'They will see that I entered and left.'

I explained to him that I should make it clear he was dead; once they were sure he had never landed in Tangier, they wouldn't look for him in Lisbon or anywhere else.

He seemed to think that he was a person of importance, and that they would ransack the world to find him. I repeated that so long as they thought Quive-Smith alive they would not spend an hour or a fiver hunting for a useless agent whom they believed to be dead.

'I know too much,' he protested.

'You don't know a damn thing,' I answered. 'I doubt if you even know what country you were working for.'

'I do, sir,' he said, and mentioned it.

By God, it was the wrong one! I suppose it's a commonplace that the underlings of a secret service should not even know the nationality of their employers, but it seemed to me remarkably clever.

I told him he was wrong, and proved

it by the major's papers. After that I had no more trouble except his natural funk of the sea.

XXVII

We were a little ahead of schedule, and the Cintra Hills were in sight at sunset. That suited me well enough; we could get the job over while the passengers were at dinner. So that no one should be sent in search of us, I told the chief steward that I wasn't feeling well, and that my secretary would be looking after me.

Müller undressed in the cabin, and I tied the money round his neck in a fold of oilskin. As soon as the alleyways were clear we took the suitcase on deck, and unpacked and inflated the boat in the shelter of the deckhouse. We could see lights on shore, so he knew in which direction to row. I made Müller repeat his orders. He had them pat, and he put them crudely. Then I lashed his clothes and the paddles to the bottom of the boat, and looped the other end of the long line around his wrist.

The wash of a ship isn't inviting. The poor devil sat on the rail shivering with cold and panic. I didn't give him time to think, but hurled the boat over and snapped at him that he would drown if he let the line tauten. I saw the boat, a dark patch bobbing on the white wash, and I saw him come to the surface. A second later, the only sign that he had ever existed was a dressing gown lying on the deck. Good luck to him! With the right job and a positive boss, his qualities of Second Murderer should ensure for him a secure and happy life.

I returned to my stateroom with the suitcase and dressing gown, and went to bed — his bed till midnight and my own till morning. When the cabin steward called us, he naturally assumed that my secretary was already up and about.

The day was abominably long. There was some doubt whether we should arrive at Tangier in time for passengers to

land that night; if we didn't, I had no hope of keeping Müller's disappearance secret. I missed breakfast and passed the morning in concealment, acting on the general principle that nobody would think of us if neither was seen, but that, if one were seen, there might be inquiries about the other. At lunchtime I entered the saloon to tip my table steward, but refused to eat. I told him that both I and my secretary had been badly upset by our food, and that I had prescribed for us a short period of starvation. There was nothing like starvation, I boomed pompously, for putting the stomach right; that had always been our experience in India.

While the cabin steward was off duty between two and four, I packed the bags and took them on deck. Cape Spartel was in sight. The purser confirmed that we should certainly be able to leave the ship before the customs closed. I collected the two landing cards. Then again I went into hiding until we dropped anchor.

As soon as the tender arrived and the baggage had been carried off the ship, I visited and tipped the cabin steward in a great hurry. He was not exactly suspicious, but he felt it his duty to ask a question.

'Is Mr. Müller all right, sir?'

'Good heavens, yes!' I answered. 'He packed up for me and took everything on deck. He's on the tender now with the baggage.'

'I hadn't seen him all day, sir,' he explained, 'so I thought I had better ask.'

'I haven't seen much of him myself,' I replied testily. 'I understand he found an old friend in the engineers' department.'

He let it go at that. Müller was my servant. I was eminently respectable. If I saw nothing wrong, nothing could be wrong.

The worst danger was on me now. Lest the tally should be wrong, I had to surrender two landing cards while ap-

pearing to surrender only one. I am no conjurer; the simplest card trick defeats me if it demands sleight of hand. This confounded business worried me far more than the job of throwing Müller overboard. I loitered near the head of the gangway, hoping there would be a rush of passengers descending to the tender. There never was. Most had already left the ship. The rest came one by one.

I dashed into the smoking room and stuck the two landing cards lightly together with the gum from a penny stamp; they were of thin cardboard, and I hoped that the Assistant Purser who was collecting them wouldn't notice that I had shoved two into his hand. If he did notice, I proposed to say that Müller was already on the tender and that he must have gone down the gangway without surrendering his card. If someone then had a look at the tender and found he wasn't there, I could only show amazement and pray that I didn't find myself in the dock on a capital charge.

I went through the entire murder trial while I stuck those two cards together: the black and incontrovertible evidence that I had concealed Müller's absence, the discovery of my identity, and so on. My fantasy had developed as far as shooting my way out of the magistrate's court when I walked down the gangway and the Assistant Purser received my two cards without a glance. Ten minutes later I was on the Tangier mole, surrounded by a yelling mob of coffee-colored porters draped in burnouses of sacking.

Passing through customs, I had my entry carefully noted. I took pains to see that the French immigration official wrote down the company director's name correctly spelled. From then on there could be no shadow of doubt that Major Quive-Smith had duly entered Tangier, and alone.

As for Müller, his late employers' discreet inquiries at the offices of the line would be duly passed on to the ship.

The stewards would remember that Müller had not been seen for twenty-four hours. The Assistant Purser would remember that when he checked the landing cards he found two suspiciously stuck together. The engineers' department — if the steward remembered my remark — would say they had never heard of Müller. And it would be reported back to Liverpool that there was indeed grave reason to fear that something had happened to Mr. Müller. Whoever had put the inquiry on foot, having found out what he wanted to know, would then laugh at the serious faces of the directors, and explain that Mr. Müller was perfectly safe and sound, and that — well, any yarn would do! Mr. Müller, for example, had feared to be cited as correspondent and had taken steps to conceal his movements.

I drove to a hotel, deposited my baggage, and booked a room for a week, telling the proprietor that I had a little friend in Tangier, and that if I didn't turn up for two or three nights he was not to be surprised. I had an enormous meal at his excellent restaurant. Then I put a razor, a bottle of hair dye, and another of stain into my pocket, and walked off into the deserted hills. Besides money, the only thing I carried out of my past life was this confession, for I began to see in what manner it might be useful.

XXVIII

I do not think that in all my life I have known such relief and certainty as in a valley between those sun-dried hills, where the water trickled down the irrigation channels from one hand-dug, well-loved terrace to another, and no light showed but the blazing stars. My escape was over; my purpose decided; my conscience limpid. I was at war — and no one is so aware of the tranquillity of nature as a soldier resting between one action and the next.

I buried that company director's passport and my own, with which I have

Keep posted about your Heart

- and live longer!



YOU may feel as vigorous and healthy as ever. But if you have reached middle age you would be wise to have your heart examined from time to time.

Usually a person's arteries gradually harden as he grows older. This process is particularly serious when it affects those arteries on which the heart muscle itself depends for nourishment. If an artery in the heart hardens and thickens, its diameter narrows, clogging circulation and reducing the heart's vigor. In advanced stages this condition is known as arteriosclerotic or coronary heart disease. It sometimes occurs prematurely in persons in the fifties or forties, or even younger.

The men and women who make headlines with sudden death from heart disease are often those who didn't know anything was wrong with their hearts. In the earlier stages of heart disease a person may feel no pain—have no idea his heart isn't equal to any strain he might place upon it.

By the time definite heart symptoms appear, some damage has been done. A sense of heaviness, oppression, or actual pain in the chest is the first warning many receive. So-called "acute indigestion," or a pain radiating to the shoulder, armpit or upper arm calls for immediate investigation. Shortness of breath during or after slight exertion may indicate heart trouble. On the other hand any of these symptoms may have a less serious origin. Your physician should decide.

As you and your heart grow older you may need to change your manner of living to avoid overexertion. Work and play should be regulated so that you get enough but not too much physical exercise. Extremes of effort such as pulling, straining, and

heavy lifting should be avoided if possible. Sufficient rest is of great importance. Keeping weight down to normal is also advisable to avoid a strain on your heart.

Thousands of men and women with heart disease are actively at work today because they followed medical advice.

The Metropolitan booklet "Protecting Your Heart" contains much valuable information for young persons and old. A post card will bring you a free copy. Address Booklet Department 939-T.

Heart Disease under 40

While there is a variety of causes of heart disease in younger people, it is often a consequence of rheumatic fever. A child who suffers from swollen joints or muscle pains should receive prompt medical care. The "poison" of rheumatic fever may affect the valves and muscle of the heart, though it may be years before the damage is detected. Promptness in recognizing this ailment, proper medical treatment and aftercare may save the heart from serious injury.

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probably finished forever. I shaved off my moustache, stained my face and body, and dyed my hair. Then I slept till dawn, my face in the short grass by the water's edge, my body drawing strength from that warm and ancient earth.

In the morning I strolled to the upper town, where I had not been the night before, and completed my change of identity. I bought a thoroughly Latin suit, spats, and some beastly pointed shoes, posting my other clothes in a parcel addressed to the Public Assistance Committee, Rangoon. I trust there is such a committee. I went to a barber who duly doused me with Eau de Cologne and brushed my luscious black hair straight back from my forehead. When this was over, my resemblance to the photograph on Quive-Smith's passport was a lot closer than my resemblance to the company director.

The regular packet was leaving that day for Marseille. I got a French visa on my passport (my new fatherland is as awkward as all other American countries — I can travel nowhere without a visa) and bought a ticket in my new name. Since I had no baggage, it was easy to bluff my way on to the ship without passing the control. Thus there was no record for inquisitive eyes that this courteous and scented gentleman had either entered or left Tangier, and no means of connecting him with Quive-Smith. I think they will be looking for their vanished agent between Atlas and the Niger.

*Extract from the letter which accompanied
this manuscript*

MY DEAR SAUL,

I write this from a pleasant inn where I am accustoming myself to a new avatar. I must

not, of course, give you any clue to it; nor would the trail of the gentleman I describe as Latin — even assuming it could be followed — lead to where or what I am.

I want these papers published. If necessary, have them brushed up by some competent hack and marketed under his name. You won't, of course, mention mine, nor the name of the country to which I went from Poland and to which I am about to return. Let the public take its choice!

My reason for publishing is twofold. First, I have committed two murders, and the facts must be placed on record in case the police ever got hold of the wrong man. Second, if I am caught, there can never again be any possible question of the complicity of H. M. Government. Every statement of mine can, at need, be checked, amplified, and documented. The three parts of the journal (two written accidentally and the last deliberately) form an absolute answer to any accusation from any quarter that I have involved my own nation.

Forgive me for never telling you of my engagement, nor of the happy weeks we lived in Dorset. I first met her in Spain a couple of years ago. We hadn't reached the point of an announcement in *The Times*, and we didn't give a damn about it anyway.

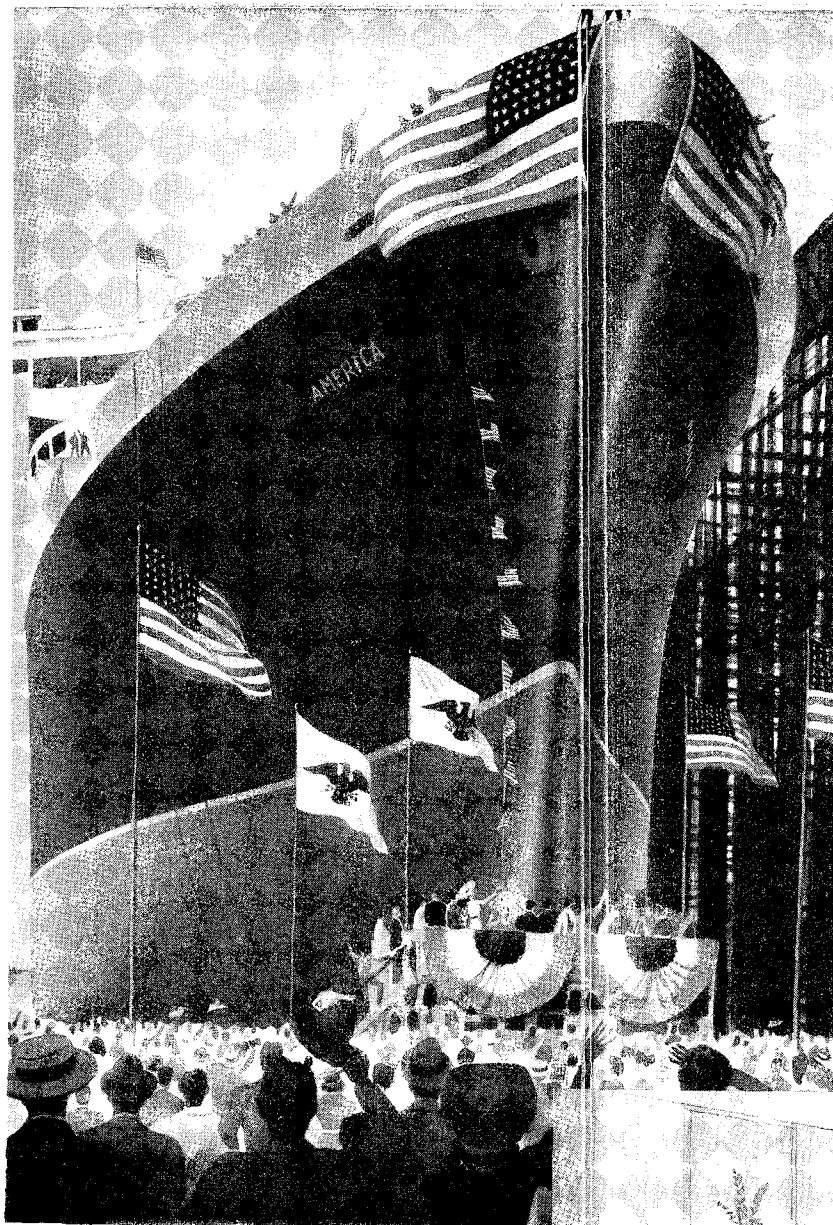
The ethics of revenge? The same as the ethics of war, old boy! Unless you are a conscientious objector, you cannot condemn me. Unsporting? Not at all. It is one of the two or three most difficult shots in the world.

I begin to see where I went wrong the first time. It was a mistake to make use of my skill over the sort of country I understood. One should always hunt an animal in its natural habitat; and the natural habitat of man is — in these days — a town. Chimney pots should be the cover, and the method, snap shots at two hundred yards. My plans are far advanced. I shall not get away alive, but I shall not miss; and that is really all that matters to me any longer.

(*The End*)

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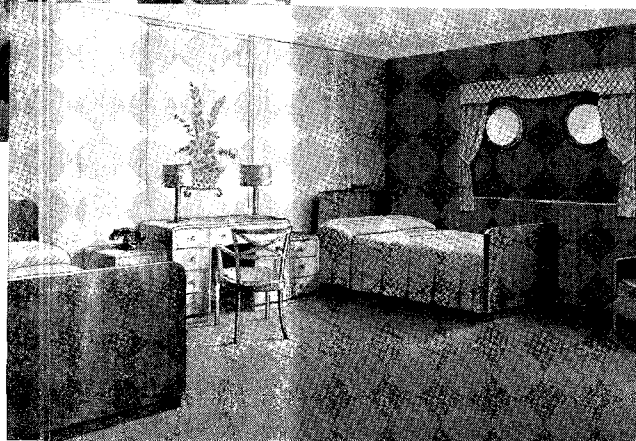


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LET'S GO SEE



THESE are the weeks when life seems to part itself neatly in the middle. The part is Labor Day. . . . No matter how tranquil and organized you may be, the first Tuesday after the first Sunday in September feels and tastes and thinks differently from the first Tuesday after the last Sunday in August. . . .

BROADWAY theaters begin to stir in their uneasy sleep. . . . Plenty of rumors of new shows.



One already so successful that no one in the cast is looking anxiously at the call lists in *Variety*. . . . *From Vienna*, musical revue by and with Austrian refugees. As gallant and heart-warming an evening as New York has seen in a long time. . . .

THE fashionable, looking terribly healthy, drift into the Colony or the Ritz. . . . Or the Barberry, where the food is good. Used to be that super-exclusive super-gourmet club called the Elbow Room. Seems there was room and to spare. . . .

NOR that it's cold yet. . . . The National Singles are at Forest Hills from September 7 to 16. . . . And this is a nice time of year to go out to Fort Tryon Park and see the Cloisters. If you're a gardener look sharp and you'll get some valuable *negative* information from the Cloister gardens. The things that are *not* there



are those which, however romantically they may flourish along the Mediterranean, will not survive a winter on the Hudson. . . .

WAY down at the other end of the town the Whitney Museum is reopening on September 13, after months of alterations. . . . Special show of twentieth-century artists. Apt to

make you wistful in the same way as Billy Rose's Diamond Horseshoe, which Fritzi Scheff and other old troupers have managed to make this year's most popular night place. . . .

LUNCH near the Museum at the Jumble Shop. . . . All the endless machinery of Grace Church's activities is beginning to move. The place is like something out of an English novel set down on Broadway. Eighty little boys from nine years up in the Choir School. . . . By the way, the Little Red School House has a few scholarships for refugee children. . . .

IF you've got to think about getting people off to school, Lewis and Conger has a fine laundry box — stout enough to defy the expressman's effort to reduce it to pulp in two trips. . . . But if you go for grace and prisms, Gregory Sales can make, or repair, chandeliers and candelabra for any room from pre-Louis XIV to post-Chamberlain. . . .

OF course, on the luggage subject, Louis Vuitton trunks are for no one under twenty-one. Or under the higher-bracket income group, for that matter. But the collection at Saks Fifth Avenue causes the mildest woman to wonder wistfully when the Grim Reaper will gather in rich Great-Aunt Mathilda. . . .



IF you go to Rockefeller Center to see the Museum of Costume Art (it's well worth it) the Linguaphone people have a shop there. If you're really earnest you can get a set of, say, Rumanian records, take them home to Muncie, and turn up in Jassy six months later able to be conversationally subtle. . . .

THE Sculptors' Guild has a new exhibit outdoors at Park and 39th. Till the end of August. . . . And Wildenstein's very large, very good, loan exhibit of French paintings from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century lasts until October. . . .

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WE took that speedboat from 49th to the Fair the other day. . . . Maybe River House, and the rest, made us real-estate-minded. Anyhow, on the Astoria side between Welfare Island and the Triborough Bridge, three small wooden houses sit on a big-enough garden plot, with water on two sides, as pretty as though they



were part of a sleepy New England fishing port. . . . Not so long ago Carl Schurz Park was a place you could rent a house for fifty a month. . . . We are wondering. We're not going to talk about it. Just edge up casually and see. . . .

THE silly season is in full blast at the Fair. The jitters they have been having about finances have got everybody mixed up. . . . The day they were going to give away the Packard right after the fireworks always turns out to be next-week Friday. . . . The Day for Someone business has gone so far that next thing you know it will be People-with-a-Cast-in-the-Left-Eye-Born-West-of-Texas Day. . . .

HOWEVER . . . The American Arts show is exciting in spots. By and large the best pieces



are the contemporary urban scene. Saul Berman's (No. 31 in the catalogue) we specially coveted. The girl at the desk takes infinite, amiable pains to tell you prices. . . .

WHEN it comes to buying, there are plenty of lovely things in the foreign exhibits. . . . Beautiful leather objects in the French Building. . . . Fabulous needlework in the Hungarian. . . . Denmark's things will mostly be at Georg Jensen's later, or you can order them. The silver, of course, is particularly fine. . . . To our mind the Swedish Building has more ideas and pretties to the square foot than any other. The Swedish House in New York will have lots of these things. The enchanting yellow china, the pewter, and the glass, for example. But probably not the fabrics, nor lots of the furniture. . . . An official told us the huge yellow horse outside might be bought when the Fair closes. . . . We want it. . . .

DON'T look now — but as this is written it is already possible to do a *leette* haggling and get

things most places below the marked price. . . . Our thought for the month is: The very latest closing date will be October 31. . . . So how about a spot of lunch in the Turkish Building around the 28th, if you see what I mean?

No more Shakespeare at the Globe Theatre. Forty minutes of vaudeville called Hollywood Star Doubles instead. . . . There's talk about an International Jitterbug contest in the Court of Nations. . . . What I always say is life is sad enough without being depressed at a show. . . .

THE *Hot Mikado* is doing three a day at the Fair. Bill Robinson's first entrance is approximately twenty-five minutes after the curtain goes up. He's no more capable of giving a bad performance than George Cohan. . . .

THE Amusement Area. . . . Well, in most places Queen Victoria would find her immortal phrase very handy. But while you're trying to think what quip to write on an ash tray look at the Incubator babies, and the Baby Giant Panda. All clean, cheerful creatures. . . . The Dali show is so cockeyed that it's really decorative after all. . . .

THE houses in the Town of Tomorrow are decorated with vast taste — mostly very bad. But out of the rubble look at the plant house to the right of the door in the Pittsburgh House of Glass. . . . And the table which swings out from a bookcase in the Little House of Brick is a honey. Several good things here, all from Sheltered Workshops. . . . The Franklin Stove in House 21 comes from Jackson's, East 57th Street, and they have several other good copies from original models. . . .

SOME of the eating places stay open all night. Jammed with Fair employees, and people from the shows, and people who want to see Fair employees and people from the shows right there at the next table. . . . But walking around after midnight is spectacular in an eerie way. . . . 'They say the leopard and the lion keep . . . ' Oh, well, shoot — It's been awfully hot and dry. . . .



NEW ENGLAND seems to brighten now, and focus all its color. Very blue water. Very red sumach. Very yellow goldenrod. . . . Lots of strictly summer-folks activities are ending. But the lobstermen, the dairy men, the Banks boats, don't pay much attention anyhow. . . .



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LAST two big sailing events are the Cruising Club's Jeffrey's Ledge race September 9, and the Eastern Yacht Club Chowder Race out of Gloucester on the 10th. . . .

AN archer friend says the tournaments in Newton on September 4 and October 12 are pretty keen. . . . Same man says the Paul Gordons in Beacon, New York, make superlatively good bows and arrows. . . . Names of archery woods are nice: Port Orford cedar; lemonwood; yew; orangewood. . . .

NEW HAMPSHIRE had its Craftsman's Show last week. Native products: mittens and rugs and silver and baskets. . . . They've nineteen shops in the state. One in Hampton Falls, in the house where Whittier died. Farthest north at Lancaster. . . . Things make most of the antique shops look silly. . . .

VERMONT and Maine are peppered with Old Home Weeks and Fairs. . . . Rutland's fair is September 4 to 9. A good one. . . . The barn knockers (trade name, we find, for the men who rush around the country and deface the landscape with billboards) have been pretty well run out of Vermont. . . .

IN Maine: Fairs at Presque Isle, Blue Hill, Lewiston, Cumberland, all between now and September 20. . . . But actually this is trot-



ting-circuit season. The light-harness men have been warming up since July. Grand finale is the Overcoat racing in South Paris the second week in November. . . . A little boy called Artemus Ward used to shout himself hoarse at the spinning spokes. . . . Fair and race dates are too numerous to list. State Chambers of Commerce will send them.

IT'S such a big state. . . . Aroostook County lives on its potatoes, and here you'll hear French and Swedish spoken. . . . Tend potatoes all summer; truck them through the drifts all winter. . . . Sardine season in Lubec lasts long after the summer houses on Campobello are boarded up. . . . Long after Elizabeth Arden's little sanitarium at Mount Vernon closes. . . . Lots of ladies there now, though. Building up from the summer so there'll be something to tear down in the winter. . . . Reservations ahead. Around \$250 a week. . . . Takes quite a lot of egg money in the blue sugar bowl before you

feel downright able to afford it. . . . Elizabeth Marbury's rest farm for working women is in Mount Vernon, too. . . .

BUT you can eat or stay at the Danish Village, Scarborough, just below Portland. . . . The Desert is near Freeport. . . . In Freeport is L. L. Bean's famous store. Probably the best outdoor clothes and fishing equipment in the country. . . . In near-by Shiloh is what's left of the Holy Ghost and Us colony. They are still waiting for revelation, and will be definitely less than cordial to you. . . .

THE Ogunquit Playhouse is open till the 9th. . . . At Wiscasset is a house which legend says was made ready for Marie Antoinette. . . . And



there, where Head Tide straddles the Sheepscot, E. A. Robinson was born. . . . At Wiscasset the Lilac Tea Room. Teeny-weeny bit too lovely, but grand food. . . .

BAR HARBOR'S International Tennis is August 22-29. . . . Not what it used to be when the navies played. But as good an excuse as any to see those beautiful, fashionable mountain islands. . . .

ALL the islands are straight magic. You can get passenger or mail boats out of Stonington, or other places. . . . On Swan Island, Howard Rich raises his famous tuberous begonias. Ask him how they'd do as winter house plants, in peat moss. . . .

THE snow folds thick and early along the eaves of the beautiful old houses. . . . The trotters go on the ice at Camden. . . . The dog-sled people come to life. Mrs. Ricker in Poland Springs has some promising puppies. . . . The coon cats nest in the woodsheds. They're unique to Maine, and if you can get a kitten it'll live to make your Siamese-fancying friends pale with envy. . . .

Stop Light

